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Near East & South Asia

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LD211347 [Editorial Report]

Israel

In response to a continuing commercial strike in East Jerusalem, Police Affairs Minister Hayim Bar-Lev told IDF radio that Jerusalem police have obtained warrants from the IDF to order shops opened in the area. He warned that curfews may be imposed on East Jerusalem, even though it is "Israeli territory." Among further reports on disturbances in the territories, IDF radio noted that five villagers in the Janin area arrived at a hospital with broken arms and legs after being beaten up during a clash with IDF soldiers. A Ramallah resident was likewise "severely" beaten by border policemen after pelting their car with stones, Jerusalem radio reported.

On the Palestinian side, Baghdad Voice of PLO radio broadcast a statement by "the unified national command of the uprising" praising the "people of the uprising" and urging merchants to continue their "effective militant role" in support. The statement greeted "brothers" in the Islamic Jihad movement "who completely joined the unified national command of the uprising." In Lebanon, a PLO spokesman cited by the clandestine Voice of the Mountain radio disclosed that the three Palestinian infiltrators killed in northern Israel 20 January were members of Fatah, acting in accordance with the PLO command's instructions to escalate armed struggle.

On the political level, sources in Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's office expressed "astonishment" at the content of Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's latest message to Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, HA'ARETZ reported. Despite Mubarak's remarks, Shamir is still ready to launch the political process with Egypt, Jordan, and "a Palestinian representation" once quiet prevails in the territories, the sources added. In another development, political circles cited by Jerusalem radio expressed concern that UN Under Secretary General Marrack Goulding's upcoming report will be "very negative" from Israel's point of view, adding that the cooperation shown Goulding by some Israeli officials was a "mistake." Responding to this criticism, the Foreign Ministry stressed that Goulding's talks with senior officials enabled him to become well acquainted with the Israeli position, the radio noted.

Lebanon

Amal Withdrawal—Amal Movement sources cited by Beirut radio announced that Amal withdrew its forces from the vicinity of Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre 20 January, noting that Syrian forces were taking up positions around the Shatila and Burj al-Barajinah camps in the capital. The Syrians subsequently completed their deployment at defined points in and around Shatila and Burj al-Barajinah "amid great welcome" by the inhabitants of the two camps, Damascus television reported. Confirming that the Syrian deployment followed the removal of all "armed manifestations" that had been "a source of tension," the television warned that the Syrians will henceforth arrest anyone bearing arms in the area.

Hostages—A political adviser at the Iranian Embassy responded to allegations that Iranian Revolution Guards have taken control of the foreign hostages by denying any IRGC involvement in the hostages issue, Beirut radio reported.

Iran-Iraq War

Raid on Lavan Island—Iraqi Air Force jets struck Lavan Island oil installations 20 January, setting them ablaze, a communique carried by Voice of the Masses radio reported.

Northern Operation—In the northern Iraqi province of Al-Sulaymaniyah, where Iran launched a new operation codenamed "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-2" last weekend, IRGC forces repelled seven Iraqi counterattacks over the past 2 days, a 21 January communique cited by Tehran radio announced. The communique added that the Iraqis suffered over 800 casualties in the fighting.

Syrian-Jordanian Talks

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad received visiting Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i, who conveyed a message from King Husayn, Damascus television reported. The two discussed developments in the region, the "uprising" in the occupied territories, and issues of mutual concern.

Sudan

Al-Hakim Assassination Inquiry—Security forces have uncovered "important facts" connected with the 17 January assassination of Iraqi Shi'ite leader Mahdi al-Hakim, and it is "certain" that the police will soon be able to identify the culprits, SUNA reported.

SPLA's Alleged Israel Visit—A Foreign Ministry statement cited by SUNA claimed that the SPLA recently sent a delegation to Israel, where Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin promised to increase military assistance to the Sudanese rebels and to send a number of experts and instructors.

Afghanistan

Soviet Contacts With Rebels—Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, leader of the Hezb-e Eslami rebel group in Afghanistan, revealed that the Soviet Union has contacted the resistance through "private channels" and now appears ready for direct talks with the mujahidin, AFP

reported. Hikmatyar indicated that the Soviet approaches came through both "private sources," which he could not disclose, and through the Soviet ambassador in Pakistan.

Rebel Attack in Konarha—A mujahidin commander told AFP that rebel forces attacked and "destroyed a large part" of a Soviet-Afghan military base in Asadabad, the capital of the northeastern province of Konarha, inflicting hundreds of casualties. The 17 January attack, the largest action in the region for several years, involved some 1,000 mujahidin fighters and resulted in the destruction of "dozens" of tanks and heavy artillery. The report indicated that the base was home to several hundred Soviet Spetsnaz commandos.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Iraq's Jasim Discusses Ties With Syria

JN211205 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1148 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Jan (INA)—Latif Nusayyif Jasim, Iraqi minister of culture and information, has stated the following:

We have read the statements, made by a number of Syrian officials, on what they call obstacles hampering the establishment of normal relations between Iraq and Syria.

Our first comment on these statements is that Syrian officials are trying to portray the matter as though Iraq strongly desires a relationship with them. They are also setting conditions, and this is contrary to reality. He added: Actually, the Syrian officials have always faced questions from Arab citizens and officials on this subject, in view of the fact that their position on the Iranian aggression against Iraq is abnormal and questionable.

The minister of culture and information asserted: The statements reiterated recently by Syrian officials confirm their known course of "increasing the price" of what they consider trump cards in their hands. But Iraq has not and will not deal with such cards. Iraq deals with the question of relations with Syria and any other Arab country on the basis of principles and pan-Arab responsibility.

The minister of culture and information added: There are also reiterated reports about mediation attempts being undertaken by these officials concerning the war. It must be made clear that nobody has authorized the Syrian officials to carry out such a mediation. The first reason is that none of the Arabs trust their role, since they have been Iran's allies throughout the past period.

He said: If this is what the Syrian officials have concluded from the spirit and resolutions of the Amman summit, then this conclusion is contrary to the spirit and resolutions of this summit. The Amman summit was clear in condemning the Iranian aggression against Iraq and the Arab countries and in calling for true Arab solidarity.

Latif Nusayyif Jasim explained: We clearly declare that we neither want nor seek a relationship with any party that does not respect the principles of pan-Arab action, and that does not sincerely work for this action away from maneuverings, intrigues, and plotting.

He added: We will not permit anybody to use these exposed maneuverings as a cover for an ambiguous stand that is aimed against sublime values and principles, the great sacrifices that our people have made, and the honored responsibility they have assumed toward the issues of the Arab nation.

The minister said: The Syrian regime itself, and nobody else, is required to behave in such a way as to make the Iraqi people, who have shed their blood because of that regime's nonnational behavior and stands, agree to establish relations with it. The first requirement is for the Syrian regime to prove its adherence to the letter and spirit of the Amman summit resolutions without procrastination, bargaining, or playing with cards. As the leader President Saddam Husayn said in his 6 January speech, the higher pan-Arab interests require abandoning those methods, atmospheres, and stands that preceded the Amman summit. They also require sincere and faithful abidance with the spirit of the summit resolutions, which the Arab nation has considered a new beginning for Arab solidarity and a serious Arab stand against the enemies of the Arab nation and those who covet this nation.

'Preparations' To Resume Syria-Iraq Flights

JN210845 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0830 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 21 Jan (WAKH)—Preparations are under way to reopen air routes and flights between Syria and Iraq. In today's issue, the newspaper AL-ITTIHAD reported that the Iraqi airline director will arrive in Damascus within the next 2 weeks to put the final touches on the reopening of these air routes. The paper cited informed sources in Damascus as saying that the appropriate political circumstances have accelerated this step and that this measure will pave the way for several more next month which concern customs transactions and transit lines between the two countries.

Palestinian Affairs

LE MONDE Interviews 'Arafat on 'Uprising'

FM201212 Paris LE MONDE in French 16 Jan 88 pp 1, 2

[Report on interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Francoise Chipaux in Baghdad; date not given]

[Text] Baghdad—"Jabalya will henceforth be known as Revolution Camp." It was around 0200 hours and Yasir 'Arafat, dressed in the olive green uniform worn by all Ba'th members in Baghdad, his kaffiyah wrapped around his neck like a scarf, his head uncovered, was speaking to one of his representatives in that camp in Gaza—the biggest camp in the region.

They discussed some corrections made by the PLO leader to the memorandum drawn up by the resident Palestinians [Palestinians de l'interieur] for Marrack Goulding, UN under secretary general for the Near East. The exchange was brief, but obviously warm.

In Mr 'Arafat's residence in the heart of one of Baghdad's residential districts, things had never been busier and everyone was closely following events in the occupied territories. Around 10 people were sitting in front of

a television set watching a video of British television Channel Four, showing young people throwing stones at soldiers who retaliated. In an adjoining room supporters were drinking tea and commenting on the events or waiting to be received.

An ambassador from a Latin American country, who was of Palestinian origin, came to greet the PLO leader before going on leave. The diplomat's heart was obviously in Palestine.

The nerve center of the network was the telecommunications room which, thanks to a relay station, is in virtually permanent contact with the occupied territories. Fax machines constantly spat out news, the latest reports from various sources, Palestinian and Israeli, carefully researched statements by Israeli officials, and reports on the situation in the field sent by activists.

The emergency committee responsible for following the situation, which was formed after the Central Council meeting held in Baghdad last week, sits constantly, with representatives from the Central Council Executive Committee and a member of the military command.

Does the latter give orders inside the occupied territories? "I cannot tell you," Yasir 'Arafat said with a smile. One thing is certain, however, there are good channels of communication between the occupied territories and the PLO command. For the time being, the order is not to use guns. The Palestinians are aware of the respect and sympathy they are gaining in the clashes between stones and guns and intend to use it.

Yasir 'Arafat is so used to the question he is no longer irritated when asked about the Palestinian organization's real role in these riots. "At first," he said, "everybody said they were fanatical Muslim groups. Then, when they realized the Muslims are part of the PLO (four have been PNC members since last April and are represented on the Central Council), they tried a different line."

"But why," he added, "are all the demonstrators in the refugees camps—even the Israeli Arabs—chanting PLO slogans? Why are they waving the Palestinian flag and pictures of me? Were not the deportees officially expelled because they belong to or support the PLO?"

"Refusal to talk with the PLO is a U.S.-Israeli slogan which they repeat, thinking they will be able to find a Palestinian Quisling or Petain. No, they will never be able to divide our people, their leaders, their fighters, and their activists. The younger generation—70 percent of the inhabitants of the occupied territories were born after 1967—have lived under the Palestinian revolution's umbrella. This new generation knows only one leadership, which is neither Jordan nor any other Arab country, but the PLO alone."

The Palestinian leaders who note, once again, that adversity unites them—"all the organizations on the West Bank and in Gaza are working together," one of Yasir 'Arafat's aides said—are now giving clear and precise orders: We must continue.

What is the aim? "To end the Israeli occupation, recover our land, and our right to self-determination and an independent state," Mr 'Arafat immediately replied and added: "We are asking for international protection by UN forces, an Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied territories, an international conference under UN auspices with the five permanent Security Council members, and the parties concerned, including the PLO, on an equal footing, on the basis of the UN resolutions, including Resolution 242, in addition to self-determination."

"What is happening," Yasir 'Arafat said, "is not the result of despair, as the Israelis would like to suggest, but an expression of the desire to implement this political platform. In all my speeches last year, and in my daily instructions, I have called the young people of the occupied territories the new generals and the new military chiefs."

For the PLO leader, the present events are the culmination of a phenomenon which started on 24 October 1986 when the resident Palestinians demonstrated as a sign of solidarity with their brothers in the Lebanese camps besieged by the Amal Shi'ite militia. Since then, he said, there have been ups and downs but never a completely calm situation.

How long can this situation last? "I received a report on the situation in the Gaza camps 2 days ago," the PLO chairman said. He produced a document bearing the Arabic and English stamps of the six camps in the Gaza Strip, in which the officials say they lack food and medicines. "I have contacted the UNRWA and asked it to remedy this situation and to use all the aid it received for the Lebanese camps, which has not been distributed because of Amal's refusal to allow its distribution. Gifts have also arrived at the UNRWA, from Austria and Romania in particular. Only the UNRWA can act and we are having discussions with it."

Asked what fate awaits the Palestinians if they are no longer allowed to work in Israel—"their main resource," Yasir 'Arafat admitted—the PLO leader immediately retorted: "How will the Israelis run their economy without the Palestinian workers? To whom will they turn?"

He added: "The confusion which reigns in Israel is a sign of the failure of their attempt to control this uprising and underlines the deadlock which their occupation has produced." International reactions are also carefully scrutinized and although the Palestinians so far benefit more from moral support than anything else, they feel, or would like to think, that this battle will not be in vain.

"How long will the Israeli soldiers be able to shoot young people who are throwing stones at them before the eyes of the whole world?" one of Yasir 'Arafat's close aides asked us.

The next meeting of the PLO security council [as published] is being awaited with great hope by the Palestinian leaders. It will be followed by a meeting of Arab League foreign ministers who might then decide to send a delegation to New York to ask for an extraordinary meeting of the Security Council on the Near East question. "We are in permanent contact with all the Arab countries," Yasir 'Arafat said, "and we hope our people will find the support they need."

It is just a hope, but members of the PLO leader's entourage make no secret of the fact that the serious events taking place in the occupied territories put an end to the "Jordanian plan, supported by the Syrians, for finding a solution which excludes the PLO," and they welcome this.

The lack of Soviet reaction is also stressed. "They had a good opportunity to promote human rights," one of his aides said, "and to respond to President Reagan's constant concern about the same subject; it is difficult to understand why they do not do so."

The formation of a government-in-exile, which was envisaged a few weeks ago, no longer seems to be on the immediate agenda. According to Mr 'Arafat, the discussions and consultations are continuing but the continuation of the struggle is now clearly the only priority.

Messengers constantly brought in telegrams, awaited orders, and left again. The PLO undoubtedly seems to be controlling, if not always directing, this uprising in the occupied territories. Is this another tragic episode in the Palestinian people's history or the beginning of a solution? It is too soon to say, but there seems to be a desire to rush ahead, whatever the cost of these riots, which is already very high.

Austria's Gratz, Jankowitsch Meet Qaddumi

AU191533 Vienna WIENER ZEITUNG in German 19 Jan 88 p 3

[Text] Tunis (APA)—In a talk with Nationalrat President Leopold Gratz and Peter Jankowitsch, chairman of the Nationalrat Foreign Policy Committee, PLO "Foreign Minister" Faruq Qaddumi expressed the PLO's readiness to enter into negotiations with the Israeli Government immediately and without any preconditions.

As Jankowitsch reported on Sunday [17 January], Qaddumi said the PLO wants to create a basis for peaceful coexistence with the Israeli people. At their meeting with the head of the PLO Political Department on Saturday evening in Tunis, Gratz and Jankowitsch expressed their solidarity with the much-suffering Palestinian people.

'Arafat Adviser Cited on PLO Political Moves

JN201852 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Brother Bassam Abu Sharif, an adviser to brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] for information affairs, has asserted that the resistance to the Zionist occupation will continue wave after wave until the occupation is ended, our right to self-determination is won, and our independent state is established.

Commenting on a statement made by Yitzhaq Rabin this morning to the effect that the PLO is perpetrating acts of terrorism, Abu Sharif said: Rabin must understand that our resistance to the Israeli occupation is a resistance to the real terrorism and to organized, racist terrorism. He added: Our resistance is one of peoples' rights enshrined in international charters, foremost among which is the UN Charter. He went on to say: We will continue to resist using all available means until the last Israeli soldier evacuates our territory.

Commenting on the PLO's political moves in the near future, Brother Bassam Abu Sharif said: The UN Security Council will begin its sessions today to review the report that will be submitted by the UN secretary general. He added: Brother Abu 'Ammar instructed the PLO representatives at the United Nations to hold all possible consultations and contacts with brothers and friends to make the UN Security Council adopt a resolution on protecting our people inside the occupied territories through the use of international forces under UN supervision and bringing about an end to the occupation under this supervision—something which would enable our people to realize their right to self-determination.

Brother Abu Sharif stated: The Arab League Council will hold an emergency meeting of the Arab Foreign Ministers Council on 23 January to discuss an Arab plan of action designed to support our people's all-encompassing uprising and to effect moves in the international arena to bring about an end to the Israeli occupation and wrest the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

As for attempts to dissociate the uprising from the PLO, Brother Bassam Abu Sharif said: These attempts are being made by the defeatists and conspirators. The final say in this regard rests with our people inside the occupied territories who have officially informed the UN secretary general's envoy Goulding, the Western states' consuls in Jerusalem, and the UN agencies through official meetings and memorandums that the PLO is their sole and legitimate representative.

He added: Our heroic people's uprising has worried many forces that are hostile to our people, to our revolution, and to our right to self- determination. This uprising has also foiled some U.S.-Israeli schemes which were being implemented by some Arab parties. It has forced all parties to face the facts once again. Our people

and their leadership, the PLO, are determined to continue the resistance until they can reap the fruits of their struggle by themselves and not through other parties. They will not allow any party to reap the fruits of the sacrifices made by the people and the strugglers.

'Abbas Urges Italy 'To Reconsider' Sentences

PM201633 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Jan 88 p 1

[Zaki Musa report: "In a Statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Abu al-'Abbas Urges Italy To Reconsider Its Guilty Verdict Against Him"]

[Text] London—Palestine Liberation Front Secretary General Muhammad 'Abbas (Abu al-'Abbas), commenting on the U.S. Justice Department's decision not to pursue him any longer in connection with the charge of hijacking the Italian liner "Achille Lauro," said that the decision came as a surprise to him.

He added that 2 and 1/2 years after that unfair and unjust decision [to prosecute him] was made, it seems that the U.S. Justice Department now takes into consideration the fact that there is no law which authorizes the United States to pursue or prosecute people who have not committed any violation of U.S. laws or any violations on American soil.

Abu al-'Abbas, who was speaking over the telephone from his home in Baghdad to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in London, said: The decision to prosecute was originally made under Israeli pressure.

Abu al-'Abbas called on the Italian authorities to reconsider and revoke the sentences convicting him and some of his colleagues. He said that these sentences had a political dimension and were the result of U.S. influence at the time of the "Achille Lauro" incident in 1985.

Commenting on Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti's statement that he was satisfied with the U.S. Justice Department's decision, Abu al-'Abbas said: This confirms that the Italian Government is convinced that neither I nor the Front has anything to do with terrorist operations.

He added: Our friendship with Italy and our great appreciation of the Italian democratic forces and the Italian people would be further strengthened by an Italian stand eliminating the vestiges of the ship incident.

Abu al-'Abbas reaffirmed that his organization is opposed to violence against civilians and is against any military action that involves killing innocent people not connected with the conflict or outside the area of the conflict, because there is a vast difference between national struggle and terrorism.

He added: Even the truth of the "Achille Lauro" incident is now known to everyone. Our comrade's sole objective was to reach our occupied territory, nothing else whatsoever.

Al-Quds Radio Carries Qalqilyah Statement

JN201950 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1724 GMT 20 Jan 88

["Text of statement addressed to the Zionist enemy soldiers by the uprising masses in Qalqilyah;" date not given]

[Text] To the soldiers of repression and torture, to the so-called Zionist border guards: We know you are implementing the orders of your masters and executioners Rabin, Shamir, and Shomron. We also know you do not have the courage to disobey orders, reject service, and rise against your masters. We know that the repressive measures you are carrying out against the masses of our heroic Palestinian people are dirty practices. This is what was admitted by Officer ('Ofar Rishef), who was serving in the heroic Gaza Strip. Therefore, we ask you to reconsider your calculations well.

O soldier, O officer: Stop and think. You are facing people who are armed with nothing but their will and faith in the justice of their cause and their inevitable victory. You are confronting people using sacred stones and firebombs to destroy the occupation and realize great victory. Therefore, O soldier, you should lay down your weapon and reject military service and organized operations of repression. Demand that Shamir, Shomron, and Rabin get out of our land, Palestine, because you know this holy land does not belong to you. Otherwise, our people will have no mercy on you and our stones will continue to pursue you and smash your heads. Our firebombs will also pursue you and burn you.

[Signed] The uprising masses in the city of Qalqilyah

'Unified National Command' Salutes 'Uprising'

JN202032 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1810 GMT 20 Jan 88

["Text of call distributed in the Gaza Strip" on 20 January by "the Unified National Command of the Uprising"]

[Text] Greetings to the revolution, greetings of affiliation to Palestine—homeland and revolution—and greetings of pride to the makers of Palestinian glory, to the people of the uprising, and to the masses of the stones front and the popular liberation war: O detonators of the erupting volcano, which is slapping the unjust occupation with its flames so that the uprising may continue against the Zionist enemy soldiers everywhere, destroy the curfews through effective cohesion and clashes and enable citizens to reject unjust military orders.

O masses of merchants: Your effective militant role in stepping up and continuing the uprising has made the military authorities lose their mind. Your heroic confrontation of all repressive practices is strengthening and the souls of the martyrs are saluting you with their blood as a symbol of freedom and independence. Go forward and let us foil all vile attempts to undermine the sweeping revolution. Your revolution will remain with you on all material and moral levels.

O heroes of the clash and confrontation: Blessed be your giant arms, your sacred stones, and your strong unity which has created a Palestinian legend at a time without legends. On this occasion we greet the brothers of the road and the march in the Islamic al-Jihad movement who have joined the Unified National Command of the Uprising. Let the glory and the creative miracle grow bigger in the face of the repressive Zionist machine. The goal is one and the fate is one. Either victory or martyrdom. From victory to victory. Revolution until victory.

[Signed] The Unified National Command of the Uprising

Algeria

China's Zhu Liang Gives News Conference

PM191432 Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 15-16 Jan 88 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Taleb Ibrahimi Meets With Zhu Liang"]

[Text] Politburo member and Foreign Minister Dr Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi received the Chinese delegation led by CPC Central Committee member and International Department chief Zhu Liang on Thursday [14 January]. Among the other people attending this meeting were Abderrezak Bouhara, member of the Central Committee's permanent secretariat responsible for external relations, and the Chinese ambassador to Algiers.

During the meeting, the two sides examined political relations and cooperation between Algeria and China and extensively reviewed regional and international political issues of joint interest.

"My visit to Algeria has enabled me and my accompanying delegation to observe on the spot the progress made by the Algerian people in all fields, under the guidance of President Chadli Bendjedid and the country's political leadership," Zhu Liang said at a news conference Thursday afternoon at the El-Mithak residence.

With regard to FLN Party-CPC relations, Mr Zhu stressed that they date back to the start of the Algerian people's armed national liberation struggle against colonialism. He noted that the ties between the two parties have constantly grown stronger over the years, thanks to the exchange visits between the two countries' leaders, especially that by President Chadli Bendjedid to China, which enabled relations to attain their highest level. The two countries share the same positions on major international issues.

"Our visit to Algeria has also enabled us to benefit from the experience acquired by the Algerian people in several fields, especially with regard to the reorganization of several socioeconomic sectors."

The CPC representative also discussed the economic reforms carried out in his country, particularly in the agricultural and industrial fields.

Turning to the PRC's foreign policy, Mr Zhu said that his country supports the just cause of people struggling for their independence. In this connection, he stressed the Palestinian cause, which the PRC resolutely supports, demanding that Israel withdraw its troops from the occupied Arab territories. He stated that China supports the holding of an international conference on the Middle East problem in a fair manner under UN auspices. He also reasserted the PRC's condemnation of the crimes committed by Israel against Palestinian civilians.

Regarding the Western Sahara, Mr Zhu said that his country supports the OAU and UN resolutions on the Saharan people's self-determination, stressing that his country encourages dialogue toward a peaceful solution that will benefit stability in the region and the establishment of Maghreb unity.

On the armed conflict between Iraq and Iran, the Chinese leader emphasized that his country supports peaceful solutions. In this regard, he vigorously rejected the allegations of Chinese missile sales to Iran and expressed hope for a rapid end to this war. He hailed the role performed by Algeria for the attainment of a peaceful solution. Finally, he expressed China's satisfaction with the disarmament treaty recently signed in Washington by the American and Soviet leaders.

The Chinese delegation left Algiers yesterday. It was seen off by Abderrezak Bouhara.

Congolese Prime Minister Meets Bendjedid

LD162228 Algiers Domestic Service in French 1800 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] On Saturday, the president received the Congolese prime minister, who handed him a message from President Sassou Nguesso. Mr Ange Edouard Poungui arrived yesterday in Algeria on an official visit which is to last several days. This visit is expected to give fresh impetus to the economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation already existing between the two countries. At the end of the audience granted to him by the head of state, Mr Poungui made the following statement:

[Begin recording] [Poungui] First of all, I would like to say that I was carrying a personal message from President Denis Sassou Nguesso addressed to his brother and friend, President Chadli Bendjedid, a friendly message which expresses the high esteem of President Denis Sassou Nguesso for his brother. On this occasion [words indistinct] President Chadli Bendjedid during this audience, which allowed us to review the present situation in Algeria and obviously the problems that are to be found, as well as the problems concerning your Maghreb zone. All information is useful to us. In return, he charged me with conveying his friendship and fraternity to his dear friend, Denis Sassou Nguesso. It is my duty to convey this message from President Chadli Bendjedid.

[Unidentified journalist] When a prime minister undertakes a visit abroad, there is a tendency to try to depict problems, but in the case of Algeria and Congo there is talk about exemplary cooperation. How do you exactly define your mission in Algeria?

[Poungui] I do not think that visits should simply be opportunities...or rather, they should not come as a result of problems that arise between the two countries; they are precisely undertaken in order to maintain good relations, to strengthen them, to promote them. I think that despite having reached a satisfactory level, there remains a lot to be done. We haven't exhausted all of the cooperation potential that exists between Algeria and Congo in all fields—political, economic, cultural, or social. That is why we came to Algeria, to continue this work. I think it is a common duty on the part of the Algerians and the Congolese. [end recording]

Joint Communique Issued

LD201501 Algiers APS in English 1347 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Algiers, January 20 (APS)—An Algerian Congolese press communique sanctioned the official and friendship visit paid to Algeria from 15 to 20 January by Congolese prime minister.

The two sides, the communique underlined, expressed satisfaction about the exemplary quality of their political relations. They also expressed satisfaction about the development of their bilateral cooperation and committed themselves to seek means likely to give it a greater impulse.

Dealing with the situation in the African Continent, the two sides examined the serious problems it is facing, the communique added. As concerns Chad, the two sides are convinced that the solution of the persisting problems lies in principles set by the bureau of the 19th OAU summit, this in an African frame without any foreign interference. They called for an achievement of national reconciliation and the restoration of peace in the sub region in the respect of territorial integrity and national sovereignty. They also expressed [words indistinct] to efforts of the OAU ad hoc committee in its search for a peaceful solution of the problem.

About Western Sahara, the two sides reaffirmed their conviction that it falls in the frame of a process of decolonization to be reached through the exercise by the Saharan people of their right to self determination and independence.

Concerning austral [word indistinct] the two sides reaffirmed their acting solidarity and their support to the Namibian people under the leadership of SWAPO and to the South African people under the leadership of ANC in their struggle against the odious apartheid regime.

They also strongly condemned the repressive policy of Israel against armless Palestinian populations and its practices of deportation which are opposite of the international law. They reaffirmed that any just and lasting solution of the Palestinian problem lies in the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to create a sovereign state on their territory. They supported the convening of an international conference under UN auspices and which will be attended by PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the communique concluded.

Special Envoy Visits Senegal, Nigeria

LD192304 Algiers Domestic Service in French 2200 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] After Nouakchott and Dakar, President Chadli Bendjedid's special envoy Mr. Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani today went to Lagos, where he handed over to the head of state of Nigeria a message from President Chadli Bendjedid.

Briefs

Lebanese Communist Visits

Mohamed Cherif Messaadiya, Politburo member and director of the Permanent Secretariat of the Central Committee, today received Muhsin Ibrahim, the general secretary of the Organization of Communist Action. The talks between the two sides dealt with the situation in Lebanon. [Text] [*Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 17 Jan 88 LD*]

Chad

OAU Postpones Meeting on Dispute With Libya

Government Says Not Informed

AB201828 Paris AFP in French 1810 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Ndjamena, 20 Jan (AFP)—The Chadian Government has not been informed about the postponement of the meeting of the heads of state of the OAU ad hoc committee charged with the Chad-Libya dispute scheduled for 3 February in Dakar, Chadian Foreign Minister Gouara Lassou stated this afternoon in Ndjamena. Gabonese President Omar Bongo, who is chairman of this committee, announced this morning that the summit would be postponed until April because of the elections in Senegal (in February).

"The Chadian Government has received no document, either from the chairman of the ad hoc committee or from the current OAU chairman, Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda, on this postponement," Gouara Lassou pointed out, adding that "if by chance things were to happen the way they have been announced, it would not be a good thing." The Chadian foreign minister believes that this postponement plays into the hands of Libya which, according to him, has been taking steps to prevent the conference from being held so as to relaunch the war against Chad. "The situation is serious," Gouara Lassou said. He called on the OAU to "assume its responsibilities in order to avoid a regional conflagration."

Lassou Reacts to Postponement

AB202008 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Excerpts] We learned this afternoon that the OAU ad hoc committee summit on the Chad-Libya conflict, scheduled to take place in Dakar in February, has been postponed to the beginning of April because of the elections slated for February in Senegal. [passage omitted]

The reaction of the Chadian Government was fast. According to the Chadian foreign minister, this postponement, if confirmed, will benefit the Libyans. Gouara Lassou expressed the opinion of the Chadian Government this evening to Radio Chad and Chad Television reporters:

[Begin recording] [Lassou] First, the Chadian Government was not informed before the postponement was announced. The Chadian Government has received no document on the issue, either from the chairman of the OAU ad hoc committee, the current OAU chairman, or the minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Gabon, who is chairing the ministerial meeting. Therefore, if by chance things were to happen the way they have been announced, it would not be a good thing, because it would favor the Libyan authorities, who would like the OAU ad hoc committee summit to be postponed. They are moving heaven and earth to achieve this in order to prepare offensives against Chad.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Lassou] We believe that the Chadian Government should be informed about the reasons for this postponement because the situation is serious, and everything should proceed efficiently and according to the timetable.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] do you think that the meeting of experts, cartographers, and lawyers is taking place (?under good conditions)?

[Lassou] Whatever the case, Chadian experts are present at the meeting. Chad has submitted the necessary documents to support its claims. It appears the Libyans have also submitted their documents to the committee, but we do not know what is contained in those documents. Nevertheless, our experts are attending the meeting and are regularly consulted by the experts of the OAU ad hoc committee.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Lassou] I repeat once more that the Chadian Government [words indistinct] request or moves, but we believe that the OAU must assume its responsibilities in order to avoid a conflagration in the region.

[Reporter] What measures do you think members of the OAU ad hoc committee should take to ensure the settlement of the Chad-Libya conflict?

[Lassou] The president of the Republic, Comrade Hissein Habre, says that Chad trusts the OAU and sincerely hopes that the OAU will take the responsibility for settling the problem. I believe that at present it is the wish of the Chadian Government that the OAU settle this problem to prove to the world that the OAU is capable of resolving problems in Africa. [end recording]

Libya

Uganda's Museveni Arrives, Meets Al-Qadhdhafi

LD271440 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1330 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution and President Yoweri Museveni of the Republic of Uganda held a working session today. President Yoweri Museveni arrived in Tripoli this morning and was welcomed by Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, commander in chief of the Libyan Armed Forces, at Tripoli International Airport.

Holds Talks With Jabir

LD181017 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0705 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Text] Tripoli, 18 Jan (JANA)—A meeting was held yesterday between Yoweri Museveni, president of the Republic of Uganda, and Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, commander in chief of the Libyan Armed Forces. The meeting was attended by the chiefs of staff of the land and air forces and a number of officers of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces. It was attended on the Ugandan side by the delegation accompanying President Yoweri Museveni.

Leaves Tripoli

LD181022 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1000 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Text] Tripoli, 18 Jan (JANA)—Yoweri Museveni, president of the Republic of Uganda, left Tripoli this morning following a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah. Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, commander in chief of the Libyan Armed Forces, saw off President Yoweri Museveni and his accompanying delegation at Tripoli International Airport.

'Terrorists' Accused of Killing Shown to Press

LD182205 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Text] Two of the terrorists involved in the criminal action that led to the martyrdom of 'Ayyad Mutus, while he was doing his duty serving Libyan Arab-Ugandan

relations, were presented to reporters and the media in the Ugandan capital last Friday. They were named as (Ahmed Kariki), alias Mwenge, and Sebuviri.

The Ugandan chief of investigations said it was the criminal Ahmed Mwenge who threw the hand grenade which led to Mutus' martyrdom and that the police are searching for a third person. He added that the small terrorist group belonged to former Ugandan Interior Minister Luwuliza-Kirunda.

Al-Qadhdhafi Holds Talks With Algerian Envoy

LD201130 Algiers APS in English 1015 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Algiers, January 20 (APS)—Algeria's ambassador to Libya, Abdelkader Hadjar was audienced yesterday by Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan Revolution. Talks were centered on bilateral relations, as well as topics relating to the edification of the great Arab Maghreb and questions of common interest.

PFLP's Qubbah Leaves Tripoli After Visit

LD202143 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 1815 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Brother Taysir Qubbah, member of the PFLP Political Bureau, left Tripoli this morning following a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Agreement Signed With YAR To Open Air Route

LD201147 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1037 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Tripoli, 20 Jan (JANA)—The minutes of a joint cooperation agreement between the Great Jamahiriyah and North Yemen in the field of civil aviation were signed. This was in implementation of the minutes of a meeting between the General People's Committee of the Great Jamahiriyah and the North Yemeni Council of Ministers regarding the need for a direct line to link the two brotherly countries.

The brother secretary of the administrative committee of the general body of civil aviation and meteorology and Brother (Yahya Sa'd al-'Adri), secretary of the general body of civil aviation and meteorology in North Yemen, signed the minutes of the agreement. The minutes of the agreement include the possibility of consolidating joint cooperation between the two bodies in a way serving the interests of both brotherly peoples and linking the two brotherly countries by a direct air route.

Brother (Yahya Sa'd al-'Adri), secretary of the general body of civil aviation and meteorology in North Yemen, told JANA after the signing of the minutes that agreement has been reached on a joint operation between the Libyan Arab Airlines and the Yemeni Airlines, opening an air route between the two countries on the path of the desired objective of comprehensive Arab unity. Brother (Yahya Sa'd) praised the massive achievements on all levels which have been realized in the Great Jamahiriyah as a result of the Great Al-Fatih Revolution.

Cooperation Discussed With Beninese Minister

LD162232 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1745 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] Tripoli, 16 Jan (JANA)—The Benin-Libyan Arab talks to bolster bilateral relations of cooperation in various fields started this morning in Tripoli. The meeting was attended by the brother secretary of the People's General Committee for the Treasury and on the Beninese side by Martin Dohou Azonhiho, minister of rural development and cooperatives, and by a number of experts and technicians from both sides.

The meetings will discuss various aspects of cooperation between the Great Jamahiriyah and the People's Republic of Benin and will draw up programs for the development of this cooperation in the economic and technical fields.

Minutes on Cooperation Signed

LD171534 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1140 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] Tripoli, 17 Jan (JANA)—Minutes for a cooperation agreement between the Great Jamahiriyah and the People's Republic of Benin were signed in Tripoli today. The minutes, which were signed by brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Treasury and Martin Dohou Azonhiho, minister of rural development and cooperation in the People's Republic of Benin, include an agreement to bolster the bilateral cooperation in the spheres of agriculture, fishing, and investments.

Jabir Greets Sudan's Al-Nasri on Stopover

LD161134 Tripoli JANA in English 1024 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] Tripoli, Ayn al-Nar [January] 16, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Al-Mirghani al-Nasri, the member of the Sudanese State Council and the delegation in his company passed by Tripoli International Airport on his way to Khartoum.

Al-Mirghani al-Nasri was welcomed at the airport by Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, the commander in chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces and the ambassador and members of Sudan to Great Jamahiriyah.

Arab Student Congress Ends, Issues Statement

LD181557 Tripoli JANA in English 1450 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Text] Tripoli, Ayn al-Nar [January] 18, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The works of the Third General Congress of Arab Students Union ended in Tripoli

last night and a statement was issued praising the stand of the Great Jamahiriyah in the face of imperialism and in support of pan Arab unity.

The participants expressed their support of the uprising in the occupied homeland affirming that it is a protest against the Camp David agreements, the policies of normalisation and surrender to the Zionists.

The congress saluted the Egyptian people in rejecting their regimes' stand embracing the enemy. The statement saluted the Lebanese national resistance and asserted the need to stop the Gulf war, and to direct arms towards the Zionist entity.

The congress affirmed the need to consolidate relations with the African nations in support of their fight against racism and Zionist interference in Africa, calling also for deeper collaboration with the countries of the socialist block.

Morocco

CPC Delegation Visits, Talks With Ali Yata

LD201331 Rabat MAP in English 1304 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Rabat, Jan 20 (MAP)—The visiting delegation from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) headed by Zhu Liang, member of the party's Central Committee and director of the Committee's International Liaison Department, Tuesday conferred in Casablanca with secretary general of the Party for Progress and Socialism Ali Yata on relations between the PPS and the CCP, the Casablanca-based "AL BAYANE" daily wrote Wednesday.

Concludes Visit 20 Jan

LD201827 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Excerpt] The CPC delegation headed by Zhu Liang, member of the CPC Central Committee and director of its International Liaison Department, left Morocco this afternoon after a visit which lasted several days. [passage omitted]

Health Cooperation Agreement Signed With Poland

LD151356 Rabat MAP in English 1242 GMT 15 Jan 88

[Text] Rabat, Jan 15 (MAP)—Morocco and Poland have concluded a cooperation agreement in matters of health.

The agreement was signed Thursday in Rabat by Taieb Bencheikh and Janusz Komender, respectively Moroccan and Polish ministers of public health.

Speaking on the occasion, Bencheikh praised cooperation between the two countries, mainly in matters of medical assistance. He paid special tribute to Polish doctors exercising in Morocco in virtue of this cooperation.

Bencheikh also stressed his department's desire to extend this cooperation to cover advanced scientific areas, mainly training, information, scientific congresses and pharmaceutical research.

The Polish minister had arrived in Morocco on Tuesday to attend the Moroccan-Polish medical days and the twinning ceremony of the Rabat and Warsaw children hospitals.

He has already conferred with Speaker of the House of Representatives Ahmed Osman and with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Abdellatif Filali.

Sudan

Foreign Ministry on Israeli Aid to Rebels

JN201514 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1427 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Khartoum, 20 Jan (SUNA)—Yitzhaq Rabin, war minister of the Zionist entity, has promised a delegation of the leadership of the southern Sudanese rebels during their unannounced visit to the Zionist entity that the volume of his country's military assistance to the rebels will increase. He also promised to send a number of experts and instructors to the rebels.

This was announced in a press statement made by an informed source at the Foreign Ministry here today, Wednesday. The source said that during its unannounced visit during the period 6-10 January the rebel delegation met with Yitzhaq Shamir, the Zionist enemy's prime minister; Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres; and Yitzhaq Rabin. The source affirmed that the rebel delegation held lengthy talks with Israeli officials on the military and medical assistance being provided by he Zionist entity to the rebels.

The delegation also met with [Israeli] Chief of Staff General Dan Shomron, his deputy, General Amod Bi'ak [name as received], and the intelligence organ's chief. The informed source added this is the third unannounced visit paid by a rebel leadership delegation to the Zionist entity in the last 2 years.

SSPA Leaders on Talks With Garang Movement

JN201356 Khartoum SUNA Arabic 1052 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Khartoum, 20 Jan (SUNA)—The leaders of the seven southern political parties, which signed the Sudan Charter, have said they are in the process of forming a

higher committee of the 16 political parties embraced by the Charter to hold a new round of negotiations with the Garang movement in preparation for the 1988 constitutional conference.

Peter Gatgouth, vice president of the Southern Sudanese Political Association [SSPA], told the newspaper AL-JARIDAH published here today that a provision in the Charter calls for the participation of all of the Sudanese political forces inside and outside the country, including the SPLA, in the work of the constitutional conference. This, he said, would help the success of the conference and the settlement of basic differences.

Dr Andrew Wieu, leader of the Sudanese African National Union [SANU], said the Garang movement has assured their parties of its desire to hold negotiations in the capitals of Kenya, Ethiopia, or Uganda. He said the Charter incorporates all of the proposals submitted by the southern political parties that would remove the present lack of mutual confidence in the political arena.

The Rev 'Abbas Ghabbush, president of the Union of African Parties [Ittihad al-Ahzab al-Ifriqiyah], considers the Charter a historic event and has called on all Sudanese parties to join the peace process through this Charter. Ghabbush said the Charter has greatly helped as a framework for the agreement reached between the African parties and the Garang movement last year on the necessity to adhere to the peaceful resolution of the southern question and to repudiate violence and war in resolving political disputes.

The Rev Ghabbush explained that consultations are under way with the government coalition, the southern parties, and the Sudanese National Party on holding talks with the Garang movement. He pointed out the movement is willing to sit down and discuss the differences.

Idris al-Banna, vice chairman of the Supreme State Council, said at a news conference here yesterday that the Mercy Council, which consists of four Muslim and Christian members as well as Dr Haj Hamad and Professor Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahim, will meet with the SPLA on 22 January in Addis Ababa to explain the Council's activities and also discuss issues related to transporting relief supplies to the south.

Al-Banna added that the Council has received a message from the Garang movement supporting its activities to transfer relief supplies to stricken areas in the south. He explained that Industry Minister Mubarak al-Fadil has held talks with the SPLA in Addis Ababa within the context of the government's efforts to achieve peace. Al-Banna said Al-Fadil held these talks with Arok, vice president of the SPLA.

Al-Nasri, Delegation Return from Maghreb Tour

EA161529 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1930 GMT 15 Jan 88

[Text] Mr Mirghani al-Nasri, member of the State Council, and his delegation this evening at 1900 returned to Khartoum from Tunis after a week-long tour to the Libyan Jamahiriyah, the Algerian Republic, and the Tunisian Republic. At Khartoum airport he was received by Mr Idris al-Banna, deputy chairman of the State Council, and the Tunisian ambassador in Khartoum [Mohamed Abbas].

Mr Mirghani al-Nasri stated that his visit came within the political initiative of the State Council to brief the Arab brothers in North Africa on the hostile aggression against Sudan, to discuss spheres of coordination and cooperation in Arab and African issues, and to boost bilateral relations with the Arab brothers. His excellency said the talks were successful and fruitful.

Mr Al-Tawm Muhammad al-Tawm, minister for Culture and Information, official government spokesman, and a member of the delegation headed by Mr Mirghani al-Nasri, member of the State Council, which traveled to the North African states, told a radio correspondent that the trip had been successful and achieved all its objectives within the framework of the general mobilization and eliminating the effects of the aggression against Sudan by the stooge John Garang, who is supported by a foreign force.

The tour included the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, Algeria, and Tunisia. The delegation was well received, which reflects the appreciation of Sudan by those states. The tour revealed the extent of the dangerous conspiracy that was carried out by the (?third) column.

The weekly press conference held by the newspapers and the government will now be at the Republican Palace, where the delegation headed by Mr Mirghani al-Nasri will meet the press reporters.

Details Results of Visit

EA171649 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 2130 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] Mr Mirghani al-Nasri, member of the State Council and leader of the delegation which toured the Arab Maghreb recently, this morning held a press conference at the Republican Palace during which he gave a briefing on the results of the talks held during the tour. He confirmed that the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah had made an open (?offer) of defence aid to Sudan and had agreed to give building material for areas affected by the recent events, as well as 600,000 tonnes of oil to Sudan.

His excellency explained that Algeria had also agreed to give [words indistinct] defense aid to Sudan. It had been decided to form a joint committee for cultural, economic, and technical exchanges. He said that during its visit to Tunisia the delegation had met the Sudanese community resident there. The community had presented various development projects and a donation of 500,000 [currency not specified] in support of the Armed Forces. Mr Mirghani al-Nasri added that during its visit the delegation had given briefings on the recent events in Sudan inasmuch as these were new developments in the external aggression on Sudan.

His excellency pointed out that the talks had also embraced relations with the Arab Maghreb states, Arab and African cooperation and the role of Arab states in (?promoting) the advancement of international cooperation and peace.

Al-Mahdi Discusses Ties With Soviet Ambassador

JN191655 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1458 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] Khartoum, 19 Jan (SUNA)—Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has discussed with the Soviet ambassador in Khartoum bilateral relations and ways of promoting them. The two sides also exchanged viewpoints on international and regional issues, particularly the situation in the Horn of Africa.

The Soviet ambassador said after the meeting here today that the USSR still supports efforts to clear the political atmosphere in the region, restore stability, and establish an atmosphere of mutual understanding. He stressed that this can only be attained through the respect of the sovereignty of states, noninterference in domestic affairs, and the adoption of peaceful means such as negotiations and dialogue.

On Sudanese-Ethiopian relations, the Soviet ambassador said the two countries are neighbors and can solve their problems within a constructive political dialogue. He said the southern Sudan problem concerns the Sudanese alone and that such problems can only be settled through peaceful means. He emphasized that the Soviet Union does not interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries and is eager to establish friendly relations with both Sudan and Ethiopia.

Talks With Netherlands Begin in Khartoum

Foreign Ministers Preside

JN191604 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1503 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] Khartoum, 19 Jan (SUNA)—Sudanese-Netherlands talks began here this morning. The Sudanese side presented a detailed explanation of the bases and principles of Sudan's foreign policy. Sudan also explained its relations with its neighbors, especially Ethiopia and Chad, to the Netherlands delegation.

The meeting, presided over by Netherlands Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek and Sudaneese Foreign Minister Ma'mun Sanadah, reviewed the hardships Sudan has encountered from the influx of refugees, which obliged Sudan to close its eastern border to prevent future influxes. The Sudanese side voiced its hope that the international community will send relief supplies to refugees in both Sudan and Ethiopia. The Netherlands side showed understanding of Sudan's position on the refugees issue.

The two sides reviewed a number of international issues, including the Middle East, the current developments in the occupied territories, and the situation in southern Africa. The talks also dealt with bilateral relations. They expressed satisfaction with the level of bilateral cooperation and voiced their desire to promote that cooperation.

Al-Mahdi Receives Broek

JN191644 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1507 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] Khartoum, 19 Jan (SUNA)—Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi received Netherlands Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek here today. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Dr Ma'mun Sanadah. The two sides reviewed bilateral relations and ways of promoting them.

Prime Minister al-Mahdi briefed the Netherlands foreign minister on the political situation in the country under the democratic system. They also discussed the Netherlands Government's participation in the enhancement of the Sudanese economy and the expansion of cooperation. The Netherlands foreign minister expressed satisfaction with the development of cooperation between his country and Sudan.

The Netherlands foreign minister arrived here yesterday evening on a 3-day official visit to Sudan at the invitation of his Sudanese counterpart Dr Ma'mun Sanadah.

Mirghani Receives Broek

EA192011 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] Mr Ahmad Mirghani, chairman of the State Council, met in his office in the Republican Palace this morning with Mr Hans van den Broek, the Netherlands foreign minister, who is currently visiting the country. After the meeting the minister said he discussed with Mr Ahmad Mirghani the support provided by the Netherlands Government to Sudan. They also reviewed bilateral relations and ways of developing and reinforcing them, especially in the economic and development fields. Issues of joint interest were also discussed. The Netherlands minister said that Sudan and the Netherlands agreed on the matters discussed.

Briefs

Japan Signs Grant Memorandum

Khartoum, 20 Jan (SUNA)—A memorandum of understanding on the Japanese grant to Sudan was signed here today. It pertains to the implementation of agricultural projects and amounts to 1.2 billion Japanese yen, equivalent to approximately $9 million. Another memorandum of understanding on a grant designed to finance the project of purchasing aerial safety equipment for airports which is being implemented by the Civil Aviation Organization was also signed today. The last grant totals 700 million Japanese yen, which is equivalent to approximately $5 million. The volume of Japanese grants amounted to approximately $54 million during 1987. [Excerpts] [*Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1445 GMT 20 Jan 88 JN*]

Bahrain

Iran 'Completely Involved' in 'Sabotage Plot'

PM201119 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Jan 88 pp 1,2

[Wahib Muhammad Ghurab Report: "Full Details of Iranian Plot Against Bahrain"]

[Excerpts] Manama, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has obtained the full details of the Iranian sabotage plot, aimed at undermining security and stability in Bahrain, which was foiled last month before it could be implemented by the arrest of the sabotage group members who are currently being interrogated by Bahraini authorities.

These details confirm that the ruling regime in Tehran is completely involved in the plot and that it was this regime which recruited the saboteurs and provided them with equipment—namely, radio equipment and broadcasting equipment to announce the so-called republic in Bahrain and the would-be president Hojjat ol-Eslam al-Mudarris, who sought refuge in Bahrain during the shah's era and was granted Bahraini nationality by the government, which was later withdrawn in view of his hostile activity.

Before the sabotage plot could be implemented, the Bahraini security services arrested three individuals: one of Iranian nationality and the other two of Bahraini nationality. Their objective was to carry out sabotage operations against oil installations and some other vital points in the country.

The Bahraini authorities have announced the names and identities of the three detainees as follows:

—Nabil Baqir, defendant No 1, is of Bahraini nationality and works as an engineer for the Bahrain Petroleum Company, BAPCO.

—Ahmad Hoseyn Mirza 'Abd al-Khaliq, defendant No 2, is of Iranian nationality and works for the Iranian School supervised by the Iranian Embassy in Bahrain; he is said to be the mastermind since it was he who recruited the other defendants.

—Khalid 'Abd al-Rasul al-Amiri, defendant No 3, is of Bahraini nationality and works as an engineer for the Ministry of Public Works, Electricity, and Water.

Authorized sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the saboteurs had been a long time preparing for this major plot and that the Bahraini security authorities succeeded in detecting early clues when an Iranian intelligence officer contacted Eng Nabil Baqir and agreed on arrangements for him to travel to Tehran. The sources pointed out that the reason for his travel was to train in the use of arms at centers prepared for this purpose and to meet with intelligence officers to receive the work plan from them.

The sources went on to say: Eng Nabil Baqir traveled to Frankurt in West Germany, where he was received by an Iranian intelligence officer who was assigned by the Iranian Embassy to arrange the engineer's travel to Tehran on an Iranian passport rather than a Bahraini one.

The authorized sources stated: Eng Nabil actually arrived in Tehran, where he spent 45 days at a training center to learn the use of arms and sabotage. After the end of this training period, he met with the so-called "Bahrain Liberation Front leader" and some intelligence officers who briefed him on the complete plan and the names of people to join him and defendant Ahmad 'Abd al-Khaliq.

The authorized sources confirmed that they "knew of what was going on but preferred to wait and keep a close watch on the group and those in touch with it." [passage omitted]

Asked whether any people other than those announced were arrested, the source replied: Yes, other people were arrested and interrogated and some of them were later released. But the source refused to disclose their number or the number of those whose arrest was required by the circumstances of the case. The source also refused to talk about whether there were any other people connected with the plot but still at large.

Information had indicated that the group planned to carry out its plot to coincide with the eighth summit of the leaders of the GCC states in Riyadh on 26 December. The arrests occurred 3 days before the summit was held. Asked about the truth of such information, the source said:

"Information and rumors circulating among people abound in a situation like this and even if some reports are correct, I believe the important thing is to know what is going on and foil it before it takes place. It is true that circumstances and occasions are usually exploited, especially since we are in a troubled zone where bad intentions are clear. But when you live in such an atmosphere, you tend to be both cautious and alert to what is going on around you; namely, events and constant false and poisoned reports that would make it difficult for you to sleep comfortably. As I have said earlier, past events as well as the clearly bad intentions prompt you to be constantly alert and work toward strengthening the internal front. This is the case in Bahrain, whose leaders are exerting efforts to help their citizens live with dignity in an atmosphere enjoying both the security and stability necessary for development and progress."

But the source refused to comment on information AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has obtained indicating the group was also planning to shell vital areas in the country with rockets and incendiary bombs. For instance, its targets included the broadcast and television building, Manama Airport, restaurants and hotels, markets, homes of senior Bahraini officials, and a number of embassies.

Information also indicates the saboteurs planned to attack Manama Prison to free the group arrested in December 1981 and convicted of plotting to overthrow the ruling regime. Some of its members were sentenced to life imprisonment and others were given varying prison sentences.

Indeed, the sabotage attempt has once again exposed Iran's planned intentions against the Gulf states, which are now totally convinced that Iran, whenever circumstances permit, seek to harm security and stability in the region's states.

A well-informed source said in this regard: We had no doubt whatsoever that there was some Iranian involvement in the plot, which reveals a new Iranian practice against us. Since the beginning of the Iranian revolution its leader have been persistent in implementing their plot by exporting the sabotage revolution to us.

According to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's information, Iran was behind the sabotage attempt in Bahrain. The group which intended to carry out the operation belongs to the so-called "Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain" based in Tehran, where the Iranian authorities allocated it a six-story building to use as its headquarters to organize internal contacts, coordinate with other sabotage groups, and recruit members.

The organization is led by Hojjat ol-Eslam Hadi al-Mudarris, who was a resident in Bahrain. The Bahraini Government had granted him nationality, but this was soon withdrawn in view of his hostile activities against the state. He carried out his activities through the Al-Hoseyni Foundation, a religious establishment used by Al-Mudarris and the leaders of other organizations as a facade to carry out their activities and where Al-Mudarris would deliver speeches calling for hostility against the government.

After his deportation from Bahrain he continued his activities from Tehran by broadcasting hostile programs against governments in the region and urging people to oppose their governments. [passage omitted]

PDRY

Government Report to Supreme People's Council

EA181109 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] The Supreme People's Council continued its fifth ordinary session this morning chaired by Brother Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas, member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Supreme People's Council Presidium.

In today's session, the Council heard the government's report, which was presented by Dr Yasir Sa'id Nu'man, member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Council of Ministers, on its activity in 1987 and the prospects for 1988. He referred to the general prospects for government activities on the basis of the directives and decisions issued by the higher party organizations, the Supreme People's Council, the Presidium, and the Council of Ministers.

Governmental activity focused on improving the living conditions for citizens by implementing the YSP's policy in the economic sphere which aims to develop and mobilize all capacities and the available oil, human, and financial resources.

The report stresses that 2 years after the 13 January 1986 conspiracy, the daily routine of citizens returned to normal in all spheres and work and production facilities in the government sector resumed their production and service activities at levels similar to those prior to 1986. In some cases these levels were surpassed desite the difficulties caused by certain economic factors. It is one of the goals of the government to overcome these factors in the coming phase.

During 1987 the government took great interest in developing the material production sector. Despite the paucity of resources and the difficulties facing various ministries, a reasonable rate of plan implementation has been achieved.

On the supply side, the plan was exceeded with the aim of satisfying citizen requirements in essential imported foodstuffs. It was also possible to subsidize the prices of essential commodities from the price balancing fund at a cost of over 6,373,494 dinars.

In the energy and water sector and the area of oil and mineral discoveries, persevering work will continue to exploit the discovered oil as soon as possible. The report states that seismic surveys and drilling work reached some 208 percent of the plan with the Soviet comrades. Contracts are currently being finalized on the pipelines and the completion of oil installations which will constitute the basis of the production of oil and gas in Shabwah Governorate.

Work is being expanded on the gold mineral project in Wadi Madan in Hadramawt Governorate. A mineral geological map will soon be completed. The project to construct a port and jetties for the oil refineries at Little Aden is under implementation, which will make it possible to receive supertankers. Meanwhile, sufficient asphalt is being produced to satisfy export capacity and local demand.

The agricultural sector has also recorded an excess over the plan with a 6-percent surplus. The value of production in 1987 reached 54.8 million dinars, an increase of

2.8 million dinars. This is attributable to improvements to existing arable land, better use of agricultural inputs, and the development of animal resources and products.

The Al-Haijah Dam has been completed, 2,250 hectares of land have been surveyed and prepared, and 15 wells have been dug and deepened. The Wadi Tuban agricultural project has been completed. The citizens' requirement for onions was satisfied by 100 per cent; potatoes by 57 percent; eggs 85 percent. The rate of spoilage of agricultural products fell compared to 1986.

With regard to fish, the government expressed an interest in developing fishermen's cooperatives. The material-technical base of the fishery sector has been strengthened by the completion of the third phase of the Aden fishing harbor and the completion of the marine life breeding project. Work is continuing on a project to build a fishery institute and on the development of the fishing villages of Ras al-Arah, Imran, Fuqum, Shuqrah, and Bir Ali.

The fishing villages will be supplied with modern reception centers to absorb the fishermen's production. The production of the fishery sector reached 89,138 tons of fish products—that is 100.5 per cent—and the local markets attained stability in fish supplies.

In the communications sector, social production last year reached some 68.5 million dinars, an increase of 6.4 percent, and an increase of 2.1 million dinars over the 1986 figure.

In the construction and housing sphere, a number of projects began, the most important among which are: The Wadi Bana bridge; the Guldmur Tunnel; Bridge No 1 on the marine drive; the completion of the Sayun-Tarim Road; and the resurfacing of a number of roads.

Other important projects were launched, including the Wasit-Bayhan road; Aden Ring road; the Waht-Tur al-Baha road tunnel; Al-Habilayn-Al-Dali road; and a beginning to construction of 100 low- cost houses at Al-Mamdarah. Work is continuing on the reconstruction of the capital, the construction of the geothermal power station, and the building of houses.

In the social services sector, 1987 witnessed a number of activities in the area of comprehensive and permanent health care for citizens. The foundations have been laid for the National Public Health Laboratory and a laboratory for monitoring the safety of medicine. The launching of a comprehensive inoculation plan will be intensified. The conditions of health cadres have been improved and a number of courses on health administration and centralization of medicines and medical equipment were held.

There have been developments in the curricula of unified schools. The publication of school books and the training of teachers has been expanded. Since teachers are the central link in the educational and instructional process, appropriate steps have been taken to improve their living conditions and pay, to provide incentives, and to ensure that qualified staff are attracted to the teaching profession. Many steps have been taken to tackle a shortage of teachers in some governorates.

Conditions and educational standards at universities have been improved. Standards required for admission have been raised. The quality of scientific research improved. A central organ for scientific research has been set up to develop and coordinate the work of scientific research organs and to expand it.

As for expatriates, the government studied ways of making it easier for them to visit their relatives in the homeland and ways of encouraging them to invest their wealth in various spheres. Efforts have been made to look after the welfare of our citizens abroad.

The defense capacity of the country has been enhanced in cooperation with the friendly Soviet Union. Cadres of the Armed Forces and the security and police organs have been trained and their combat readiness increased to enhance their ability to carry out their duty of guaranteeing security so the people may live in freedom, dignity, and stability.

Efforts aimed at unity continued in 1987. The good work of the leaderships in the two Yemens was reflected in the coordination of development projects and the establishment of joint companies. There is a marked development in trade.

On the international scene, several of our foreign policy moves helped to consolidate the position of Democratic Yemen in the Arab world and the international arena. Relations have been activated and developed with sisterly and friendly countries and with international organizations. Positive results have been received on the level of international relations.

During 1988 the government will attach importance to the development of material production sectors to achieve high levels of implementation. The government plans to initiate economic and technical studies for the development of various sectors. Basic guidelines will also be drawn up this year and next year to develop food production up to the end of the century.

In the industrial sector, a biscuit and sweets factory will begin operation. A creamery and the Aden refinery [as heard] will be developed. A soap and detergents factory will be established. Importance will be attached to the handicraft industry. Projected industrial output is estimated at 47.4 million dinars.

During 1988 there are plans to implement projects for the development of the oilfields discovered in Shabwah and to begin work on the basic infrastructure for processing at the Aden refinery.

A study of reserves of the gold mines in Wadi Madan will be compiled. Foundations will be laid for a study of economic gains and the possibility of an early start to gold production. Foundations will be laid for work to provide oil derivatives, particularly cooking gas, to all parts of the Republic.

A number of development projects will be implemented at the Aden refinery this year. This will mark a new stage in oil production.

In the agricultural sector, importance will be attached to providing funds for citizens to grow fruit and vegetables and to increase agricultural and livestock production, aimed at achieving an output of 58 million dinars, an increase of 7.5 percent compared to 1987.

In the fish sector, output during 1988 is expected to reach 90,700 tons of fish and fish produce. Individual consumption will be 23.9 kg. More benefits will be derived from the completion of the fishing harbor project, especially the central workshop for the servicing of fishing vessels, from the continued construction of the Fisheries Institute, from the development of procurement centers at Ras al-Arah, Umran, Fuqum, Shuqrah, and Bir Ali, and from the inauguration of the marine hatchery at Al-Ghadir.

In implementation of the resolutions of the General Party Conference, the Political Bureau, and the Government, 41 projects will be carried out in the electricity and water sector. Basic work will be completed on the installation of a third generator at the Al-Hiswah geothermal station, more electricity will be generated from other stations, and the power transmission network will be expanded and a power line will be built from the Al-Hiswah station to Abyan Governorate.

There are 40 water projects in different governorates of the Republic. These are in addition to those being carried out in arid areas in accordance with the resolution of the sixth session of the Central Committee. They are in addition to those being carried out in accordance with the resolutions of the Political Bureau regarding the Governorates of Abyan and Shabwah.

In the housing and construction sector, a number of new roads will be built, the most important ones being Lawdar to Muayras, Dabut to Al-Ghaydah, and Al-Askariyyah to Labus. Work will be continued on the Wasit to Bayhan, Al-Habilayn to Al-Dali, Waht to Tur al-Baha roads and the Aden ring road.

The Council heard assessments of 1986 by the prime minister, the economic and administrative committes, ministers, and members. This was the first year of the third 5-year plan for economic and social development for 1986-90. The Council ratified a number of resolutions and laws.

In a cable read by Brother Fadl Muhsin 'Abdallah, member of the Political Bureau and secretary of the Central Committee, the Supreme People's Council hailed the heroic steadfastness of the popular uprising in the occupied Arab territories against Zionist repression. This is an embodiment of the huge militant potential of the Arab Palestinian people in their struggle to secure their legal rights, foremost being the right to self-determination and a return to their homeland to establish an independent state under the leadership of the PLO, their legal and sole representative.

The Council affirmed Democratic Yemen's support for the struggle launched by the Palestinian people. The Council pointed out our country will continue to fulfill its national responsibilities in the face of the challenges which threaten just Arab causes and infringe upon the great interests of our Arab people.

The Council will continue its session this evening when it will complete discussions on topics listed on its agenda.

Communique on Council Session

LD191228 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1245 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Excerpts] Brothers, the Supreme People's Council this afternoon concluded the business of its fifth ordinary session. The Council discussed the communique reporting its ordinary session.

The Supreme People's Council held its fifth ordinary session chaired by Brother Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas, member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Supreme People's Council Presidium, from 16 to 18 January, 1988. The Council discussed all matters on its agenda and adopted the appropriate measures. [passage omitted]

The Supreme People's Council appeals to the remaining misled people to return to their native parts and participate with the rest of the toiling masses in building our new life and defending the gains of the revolution.

With regard to the external arena, the fifth session was held during a period of critical and complicated development in the Arab and international arena. The imperialist circles continue to escalate their aggressive designs to create more hotbeds of tension in the world. At the same time, supporters of the international peace movement are achieving new victories for the benefit of mankind and in the direction of peaceful coexistence.

The Supreme People's Council, after hearing the political report presented by the Presidium, praised the political, economic, and social activities of the Presidium, government, and mass organizations in the past year. It calls on them to continue their efforts to enhance the overall performance of government organizations on the basis of the YSP program and the resolutions of the

Central Committee and its Political Bureau. This will provide continuous improvement in the form and content of the progressive and democratic regime in our country.

After hearing the government's report on its activities in 1987 and the prospects of its work for 1988 and discussing it, the Supreme People's Council expresses deep satisfaction at the government's overall performance during the past year based on the directives and decrees issued by the higher party organizations, the Supreme People's Council, and its Presidium. The direct outcome of all this enhances stability and security and the return of normal life to the country. [passage omitted]

The Supreme People's Council approves of the government's plans for the current year and calls on it to make increased efforts to perform its tasks in all spheres, to develop all the positive aspects which manifested themselves in the past year, and to overcome shortcomings and errors.

During its session, the Supreme People's Council considered the plan for 1988 as the 3d year of the third 5-year plan and approved it after extensive discussion and valuable observations from the members and the specialized committee.

It is expected that the value of social production in market terms will rise from 423.5 million dinars in 1987 to 479.5 million dinars in 1988, this being an increase of 10.9 percent. National income will rise from 218.3 million dinars to 240.9 million dinars, an increase of 10.4 percent. This will lead to an increase in the individual's average share of the national income from 95.8 dinars last year to 103.1 dinars, an increase of 7.6 percent.

[Word indistinct] the current year to strengthen the leading role of the state sector in overall economic activity. Contribution to production is expected to increase to 13.4 percent. This will mean an increase in contribution to the total value of social production from 51.7 percent to 52.4 percent in 1988.

The Supreme People's Council stresses that the issue of production and increasing production is the main and principal goal toward which all official and peoples' efforts must be mustered. To achieve this goal, which should be the real gauge of the extent of our success in implementing the various tasks, the Council strongly stresses the need to encourage individual producers, especially in the agricultural and fishery sectors, and to work according to the free-sided system of marketing, namely the public, the cooperative, and the private individual.

The markets should be organized in such a way as to help the application of the system. The Council stresses the need to utilize all available potentials, to channel interest in the studies of economic feasibility, and to strengthen the links between scientific application and physical implementation.

It also stresses the need to strengthen the central statistics organ, to take all measures to raise the level of the planning organs, develop economic efficiency, strengthen the level of supervision, reduce production costs, lay down an exploitation plan for unemployed capacities, both material and human, and draw up a program to maintain machinery and equipment and all the fixed assets in production and work facilities which should be properly used.

The Supreme People's Council also considered in its session the drafts of the state's general budget, the estimates of the united budget for public corporations, and the two programs of supply and imports for 1988. The Council approved both of them after ample discussion. [passage omitted]

The Council stresses the need to raise the level of the production of fish, vegetables, fruits, chicken, and meat for the good of local consumption. It calls for fixing production and marketing plans to ensure an improvement of the production indices [word indistinct] and greater interest in industrial, fishery, and agricultural commodities which can be marketed. There should be a reduction of the reliance on and commitment to importers from foreign markets.

With regard to the external activity of the Council and its participation in international parliamentary life, the Council considered a report on the participation of a delegation from the Council in the 1987 meeting of the International Parliamentary Union. The council expresses its satisfaction with the outcome of the delegation's participation. It also stresses the need for preparations for such participation.

The Council discussed and approved the annual report of the central supervisory and auditing organ on the final accounts of the government for the year [word indistinct] and the amendments to the plan of the first year, namely, 1986, of the 5-year plan for economic and social development in the period 1986-90. It calls once again for a commendation for the central statistics organ because of its provision of precise statements which help the planning organs to draw up economic and social plans on an objective basis and according to a strict scientific method.

With regard to the national issue, that is, the issue of the unity of the Yemeni people and soil, the past year was characterized by wide unitary activities between the two parts of the homelands at all official political levels and at the level of the masses. The Yemeni arena witnessed wide activities, the most essential of which were our

peoples' celebration of the silver jubilee of the everlasting 26 September Revolution and the 29th anniversary of national independence in the southern part of the homeland.

The past year witnessed a number of meetings between the leaderships of the two parts and an exchange of delegations at all levels. The most prominent of these was the visit by the brother secretary-general of the YSP Central Committee to Sanaa last June, the participation of the brother chairman of the Presidium in the silver jubilee of the glorious 26 September Revolution and his meeting with Brother 'Ali Abdallah Salih during the Arab summit in Amman.

The Supreme People's Council expresses its satisfaction and optimism at those successes. It is determined to continue efforts with the brothers in the northern part of the homeland during the coming period and to activate sessions of the Yemeni Higher Council, the joint ministerial and unification committee, as this is considered the practical path to driving the Yemeni unification process forward.

In the sphere of foreign policy, the Supreme People's Council assesses positively the activities by the Presidium and Government at the regional level and in the Arab and international arenas which help to reinforce the role and effectiveness of our country in international life. The Council calls for that activity to be continued.

As for the Iraq-Iran war, the Supreme People's Council reiterates its call again to the brothers in Iran and Iraq to immediately halt the war in response to all the efforts and calls, including UN Security Council Resolution 598.

The Council also expresses its pleasure with the results of the visit by the brother secretary general of the YSP Central Committee and the visit by the brother assistant secretary general to Addis Ababa. It calls for the promotion of coordination between our country and the PDRE on the basis of the close strategic relationships between the two revolutions.

The Council hails efforts exerted for developing relations of cooperation with the brothers in Syria, Algeria, and Libya and other Arab states on the principles of Arab solidarity. The Council appreciates our country's positive participation in Islamic and Arab summit conferences, in which our country's firm stands toward the just Arab causes were stressed, headed by the cause of our Palestinian people. [passage omitted]

The Supreme People's Council expresses satisfaction at the development of close relations in all spheres between our country and the USSR and the states of the socialist system. The Council considers the visit of the brother secretary general to Moscow and his participation with a high-level party and government delegation in the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution to be an act of considerable significance which stresses the solid nature of the firm strategic relations between the two friendly countries.

In this session, the Supreme People's Council ratified a draft action plan for 1988 and ratified all decrees and resolutions of the Presidium issued in the period between the two sessions of the Council. [passage omitted]

The Council also urges the people to continue struggling to achieve the goals of the 3d year of the third 5-year plan for economic and social development and to achieve the programs and plans of the party and the state power organs so the toilers' celebration in our country will become an increasingly better and more beautiful celebration.

Yemen Arab Republic

PLO's 'Arafat Arrives in Sanaa 19 Jan

JN200854 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 0430 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Excerpt] Struggler Brother Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, arrived in Sanaa last night on a visit to our country lasting several days. [passage omitted]

Received by President Salih

JN201316 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Brother Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, received struggler Brother Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, at his office at the presidential palace this morning. 'Arafat acquainted the president with the current developments in the Palestine question in light of the Palestinian people's comprehensive uprising in occupied Palestine.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed current developments in the Arab and international arenas and the militant fraternal relations between the Palestinian and YAR peoples and revolutions.

Brother 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih stressed our country's support for the Palestinian people's uprising in occupied Palestine. He also greeted the great heroic spirit of the Palestinian masses and their valiant confrontation of the Zionist enemy's repression and terrorism.

He also appealed to the international community to assume its humanitarian responsibility and to adopt a just stand toward the torture, repression, and starvation of the Palestinian people at the hands of the Zionist authorities.

He also urged his brother leaders of the Arab and Islamic states to support the fraternal Palestinian people's struggle with all political, moral, and material means to enable them to stand fast in the face of the authorities of coercion and Zionist occupation and to pursue their struggle to regain their national rights.

Brother Bassam Abu Sharif, Brother Yasir 'Arafat's information adviser, attended the meeting.

MENA Interviews Deputy Prime Minister Makki

NC171551 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1335 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] Cairo, 17 Jan (MENA)—Dr Hasan Makki, YAR deputy prime minister, has described President Husni Mubarak as "a figure who enjoys great respect and appreciation" among the Arab people in general and the Yemeni people in particular because of his prominent Arab stands and major role in promoting solidarity and in unifying Arab ranks.

Dr Makki, who is currently visiting Cairo to attend the celebrations marking the 30th anniversary of AAPSO, told MENA that during President Mubarak's upcoming visit to Sanaa, during which he will hold talks with his brother, YAR President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, the guidelines for Yemeni-Egyptian cooperation will be laid down. He noted that this cooperation is bound to promote solidarity and joint Arab action. Dr Makki further asserted that Egyptian-Yemeni cooperation will witness major developments in all spheres in the coming stage.

The YAR official added that his country is waiting impatiently for President Mubarak's visit to his second country. He asserted that the visit will mark a new phase in the long and full record of relations between the two countries.

Dr Hasan Makki pointed out that President Mubarak's visit to the YAR will bolster his true Arab orientation. He added that it will also contribute to the current efforts to reformulate Arab action on new foundations based on cooperation and cohesion in order to confront mutual challenges.

Concerning the positive effects of President Mubarak's recent Arab tour, the Yemeni official said that the tour provided a good opportunity for discussing ways to confront Arab issues and problems, and for forwarding proposals to resolve them. He affirmed that meetings among leaders provide better opportunities for resolving minor problems and differences. Dr Makki added that such meetings also lead to further cohesiveness and increase the ability to surmount the obstacles facing joint Arab action.

The YAR deputy prime minister noted that the next few weeks will witness an extensive exchange of visits between senior level Egyptian and YAR delegations. He disclosed these delegations will deal with various economic, trade, cultural, and educational issues.

Dr Makki remarked that the forthcoming meeting between the two presidents will give a strong impetus to bilateral relations, and raise them to the level to which the Egyptian and Yemeni people aspire.

In his interview with MENA, the YAR deputy prime minister viewed the prospects for Egyptian-Yemeni cooperation in the field of petroleum, particularly in the wake of recent oil discoveries in the YAR. He asserted that Egypt's expertise in this field belongs to the Arabs, and expressed certainty that Egypt will share its knowledge with its brothers in the YAR. He said that Egypt had always been a generous and pioneering country in all spheres. Dr Makki said: For our part, we welcome and look forward to such cooperation for the good of the two fraternal peoples.

Dr Hasan Makki declared that the recent oil discoveries in the YAR indicate that oil exports may possibly amount to 200,000 barrels this year, and increase to 500,000 annually by the end of this decade.

He explained that drilling and prospecting activities are continuing along the Yemeni coastline on the Red Sea and in other areas inside the country.

Regarding the efforts that are currently being exerted to revive the Collective Arab Defense Pact, the YAR deputy prime minister said his country is in the forefront of those states that are committed to all Arab agreements and obligations, including [the Collective Arab Defense Pact]. In this connection, he noted that the YAR now has forces fighting alongside Iraqi soldiers to defend the eastern gateway to the Arab nation.

Despite this, Dr Hasan Makki pointed out that the YAR has been incessantly calling for peace between the two Muslim countries—Iraq and Iran. He said the YAR also supports Iraq in its peaceful endeavors and inclinations. Dr Makki added that his country praises Iraq for accepting all of the international and regional initiatives calling for a cessation of the bloodshed between the two countries.

With regard to the future relations between the two sectors of Yemen, especially following the death sentences that were passed recently in Aden against the supporters of former President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, the YAR deputy prime minister said that as far as Sanaa is concerned, there is no alternative to the option of

unity for the benefit of the one people in both sectors of Yemen. He said that efforts are now being made to revive the work of the committees for unity between the two countries.

The YAR deputy prime minister said that President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and the YAR Government are continuously making efforts to revive dialogue with the officials in Aden. He added that the YAR also is striving to implement the unity constitution the concerned committees in the two countries have drawn up, so as to reunite the homeland. He emphasized that a united Yemen may then assume its real position and role in Arab action and thus consolidate the Arab nation's cohesion and solidarity.

Regarding relations between the YAR and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the recent reports on the resumption of discussions on the border issues between the two countries, Dr Hasan Makki emphasized that borders do not exist between brothers and that any dialogue in this or any other regard takes its normal course between the brothers of the one country. Dr Hasan Makki described Saudi-Yemeni relations as excellent and fateful, stressing that they are growing stronger in all fields.

He noted that the great number of Yemenis who currently reside in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have been given all facilities to work and to enter the country without visas. He added that Saudi Arabia is treating them like Saudi citizens.

The Yemeni official affirmed that the Yemeni-Saudi Coordination Council, which is cochaired by the Yemeni prime minister and by Prince Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, Saudi second deputy prime minister and defense minister, will play a major part in boosting cooperation and integration between the two countries in various domains.

Responding to a question on how the YAR evaluates the recent Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories and current Arab efforts to support the PLO and to use the uprising for the purpose of seeking a just settlement of the Palestinian cause, the YAR deputy prime minister announced that the YAR's support for the Palestinian people and their legitimate representative, the PLO, is unlimited.

He noted that the Palestinian uprising has enjoyed unparalleled support from the Government and people of the YAR and from the Peace and Solidarity Committee which the YAR chairs. He said calls will be made to organize new popular conferences and rallies to support and assist the Palestinian uprising and to implement the recommendations pertaining to this issue which the conference of Arab solidarity committees recently adopted in Cairo.

Dr Hasan Makki described the Palestinian uprising as a titanic action, a new Palestinian surprise for the occupier, and a step along the road to restore Arab rights, to liberate the land, and to establish an independent Palestinian state.

The YAR deputy prime minister is due to leave Cairo for his country tomorrow, Monday. He had participated since 11 January in the week-long meetings of the extraordinary conference of the Arab peace and solidarity committees. The conference had been organized by the Egyptian Solidarity Committee. The YAR deputy prime minister had also attended the celebrations marking the 30th anniversary of AAPSO.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

Communique No 2,992

JN201617 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1537 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Communique No 2,992 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 20 January]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O glorious Iraqis, at 1220 [0920 GMT] today, a number of our aircraft flew a distance of approximately 800 km away from our international borders. Piloted by our rapacious hawks, our aircraft headed for Shaykh Sho'eyb Island, which is called Lavan Island by the enemy of the Arabs and Muslims, the Zionist Iranian regime.

With perfect command planning and daring accurate performance, our hawks managed with God's assistance to penetrate the enemy defenses on this island and direct their destructive bombs against its oil installations. They hit their targets with extreme accuracy, blew them up with their bombs, and set them ablaze, leaving columns of smoke covering them.

Having carried out this heroic mission, all our hawks returned safely with their aircraft in God's care and protection .

It is the Iraqi people's legitimate right to have their Armed Forces deal the strongest blows to the Iranian regime's war effort as long as this regime rejects the international will toward the need to establish peace and solve the dispute through peaceful means.

Those trading with the war and its woes and adhering to impossible ambitions toward Iraq and the Arab nation must be punished. God bless our heroic Air Force—command, hawks, officers, and other ranks. God be praised all the time.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 20 January 1988

Communique No 2,993

JN201801 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1704 20 Jan 88

[Communique No 2,993 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 20 January]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our valiant Armed Forces will continue to be a devastating force against the Zionist Khomeyniites, who covet our land and envy our progress. The results of our forces' activities for last night and today are as follows:

1. Our heroic Air Force carried out 65 combat missions today against the enemy units and oil installations referred to in Communique No 2,992 issued this evening. The aggressors sustained further losses in these missions. Having carried out their missions, our aircraft returned safely to base in God's care and protection.

2. Our valiant helicopter gunships carried out 43 combat missions. They inflicted on our country's enemies important losses in personnel and equipment. Afterward, they returned safely to base, God be praised.

3. A force from our units in the II Army Corps central sector raided opposing enemy positions. They killed or injured a number of the aggressors and destroyed three infantry positions, one SPG-9 gun, and one single-barreled machinegun. The force returned safely to its position. Seven enemy personnel were also killed in the same sector.

4. Two infantry positions were destroyed and their occupants killed in the I Army Corps northern sector.

5. One shovel was set ablaze and two observation posts were destroyed in the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah.

6. Two enemy personnel were killed and one infantry position was destroyed in the IV Army Corps sector east of Maysan.

7. One large vehicle was damaged, one scoundrel was killed, and one infantry position was destroyed in the VI Army Corps sector east of the Tigris.

8. One enemy soldier was killed and one shovel and one observation post were destroyed in the VII Army Corps sector.

9. The criminal enemy shelled with long-range artillery residential districts in the village of Chandri and the outskirts of Khanaqin. The shelling resulted in the injury of two children and one civilian. Swift recovery to our wounded, God willing.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 20 January 1988

AL-THAWRAH Calls Iranian Remarks 'Bad Joke'

JN191407 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 16 Jan 88 p 2

["A Stand" column: "What Dialogue and What Good-Neighborliness?"]

[Text] The remark by the Iranian regime's foreign minister earlier this month about his regime's readiness to meet with [representatives of the] GCC member states and his verbatim comment that such contacts are compatible with the good-neighborliness policy pursued by Iran in the Gulf are undoubtedly a bad joke.

However, it is certain that when he talked about his regime's readiness for dialogue and good-neighborliness, Velayati was not jesting, offering inducements to the Arab Gulf states, or reassuring them. He was in fact hiding a serious plot which his regime hatched to topple the regime in fraternal Bahrain, a plot scheduled to be implemented at 0500 on 1 January 1988.

According to Iranian journalist 'Ali Nurizadeh, the plot that was foiled by the Bahraini security forces in the early hours of 1 January aimed to proclaim a Khomeyniite republic in Bahrain with Hadi al-Mudarris as its president. Al-Mudarris had left for Farsi Island on the last night of December 1987 to be close to the scene of events. According to the conspiracy, Al-Mudarris was to invite Iranian forces to occupy Bahrain immediately after his supporters seized Manama.

Clearly, the increasing talk about the Iranian regime's readiness to hold a dialogue with the GCC states and about a policy of good-neighborliness primarily aimed to mask the Iranian regime's strategy and to hide its malicious plots and plans, namely, the strategy to export the so-called "Islamic" revolution and to support its agents in the area, was consolidated at two conferences held in Tehran recently.

The first conference was held on 22 November under the title "The World Conference on the Sanctity of the Two Holy Mosques" and the second conference was held on 1 December under the title "The Third Liberation Movements Conference."

At these two conferences, attended by the agents of Iran and its surrogates in the region, Iran's Khomeyni affirmed it does not intend to introduce any change in its policy toward the Arab states in general and the Gulf area in particular.

According to reports from within Iran, among the most important results of these two conferences was the consolidation of the general Iranian strategy of exporting the revolution and seeking to set up Khomeyniite republics in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain and then in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, and Jordan.

Only 2 days ago the Khomeyni regime said it will send 150,000 people to Mecca during this year's pilgrimage and Mehdi Karrubi, leader of the so-called Iranian pilgrimage mission, said the Iranians will hold demonstrations in Mecca and Medina with a greater determination than in the past.

Such declarations express the Iranian regime's clear commitment to the Tehran regime's strategy in the region, a strategy for aggression, plotting, and spreading chaos, terrorism, and crime under the guise of Islam. It is the same strategy followed by successive regimes in Iran, a strategy that views the Arabian Gulf region as a vital sphere for influence and achieving expansionist ambitions.

The Khomeyniite conspiracy against Bahrain and all of the Iranian regime's actions and policies toward Arab Gulf and non-Gulf states demonstrate that this racist regime cannot relinquish its hostility, expansionist ambitions, and evil intentions against the Arab nation. One can say the deteriorating situation within Iran in all fields and the Khomeyni regime's total defeat by a capable and victorious Iraq have caused that regime to increasingly wager on the implementation of its expansionist policy of aggression in new arenas and with new methods.

The Iranian regime's claims and arguments are one thing and its actions are another. It talks about its readiness for dialogue and good-neighborliness at a time when it is about to implement a plot to overthrow a regime in a Gulf state. It is a defeated regime politically, militarily, psychologically, and economically, a regime that falsely pretends to be flexible and to have changed its policy to achieve its ambitions and evil intentions.

Those who think the Khomeyniite snake will relinquish its venomous nature of aggression by changing its skin are mistaken. It changes its skin in order to bite at the right moment.

Concern Noted Over 'Credibility' of UN Report

TA210639 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
0505 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Political circles in Jerusalem are greatly concerned about the UN secretary general's report on the territories, scheduled to be published in New York tomorrow. It is feared that the report, drafted by UN Under Secretary General Marrack Goulding, will be very negative from Israel's point of view, as Goulding's meetings with the defense and foreign ministers and the cooperation extended him may augment the report's credibility. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports:

[Begin recording] People in Jerusalem are now saying that Israel's actions have been self-defeating. Initially, Israel completely rejected Security Council Resolution 605, which provided the basis for the under secretary general's visit to prepare the report on the territories. Goulding himself, prior to his departure, said he felt he was not welcome in Israel, but that the UN secretary general had no alternative but to send him. In the end, despite the initial tendency to reject the guest and keep away from him, the foreign minister, defense minister, and coordinator of activities in the territories all met with him.

The concluding document, which was prepared in Jerusalem, stated that in the process of the visit, when Goulding saw that Israel not only did not restrict his movements but actually lent him assistance, he increased his visits to the territories, saw more, spoke with residents, gave interviews to the media, and even extended his stay beyond what his mission required.

Now Jerusalem is afraid that the report to be published in New York tomorrow will be negative from Israel's point of view and yet will appear reliable to those who peruse it, being based on meetings with senior Israeli officials and apparently drafted with Israeli help. The political sources therefore say that the cooperation shown Goulding was a mistake which will apparently lead to more pressure from other UN bodies and from various parliamentary groups who will now demand the right to send investigation delegations to Israel and to receive official Jerusalem's aid and cooperation. [end recording]

Goulding Mandate Defended

TA210820 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
0800 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem says that the visit of UN Under Secretary General Marrack Goulding was within the framework of his mandate to visit the area at any time. The Foreign Ministry spokesman said that Goulding's meetings with senior officials such as the foreign and defense ministers enabled him to become well acquainted with the Israeli position regarding the territories before preparing the report to the Security Council, to be submitted and published tomorrow.

Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami notes that this Foreign Ministry statement came in reaction to the assessment made in Jerusalem that the report on the situation in the territories will be negative, despite of the extensive cooperation given to this diplomat during his visit to Israel.

Rabin Objects to UN Observers

TA201906 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
1800 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Interview with Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Alan Ben-'Ami on 20 January; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Ben-'Ami] The Security Council is soon to begin discussing a report on the situation in the territories as a UN envoy is seeing it. There is talk that they may suggest bringing UN observers to refugee camps here, possibly UN soldiers. How do you relate to this, what is your...

[Rabin, interrupting] In accordance to the international law, we are the government that has to run the territories by military government and by Civil Administration that we added. We will not allow any foreign element to replace Israel's responsibility over the territories, and therefore they can discuss whatever they want. Israel will remain the sole—and I stress, the sole—responsible power over the territories.

Defense Minister Rabin Tours Judaea, Samaria

TA191240 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1105 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Interview with Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Arye Gus "during Rabin's tour of Judaea and Samaria today"—recorded]

[Text] [Rabin] What we dealing with here are occasional attempts which have decreased significantly in terms of violent disturbances; in most of the territories we were able to forcefully and immediately repress these disturbances. The first order for the security forces is to prevent violent demonstrations with force, might, and blows. I assess that the number of demonstrations in the Gaza Strip and in Judaea and Samaria has almost dropped to zero. The second thing we must do is secure open traffic arteries and the third is prevent tire-burning incidents; today there are almost no burning tires. The present struggle revolves more around the strike and the prevention of workers from going to work. We will take care of this, too, although I consider it less important.

If they insist on striking and not supplying commodities, let them not cry afterward and protest that there is a shortage of commodities anywhere. There is no shortage of commodities anywhere. The population is denied

access to the commodities by those who threaten the shopowners, although we have just passed through Ramallah and you saw that almost everything is open. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 1100 GMT on 19 January adds that addressing the issue of food shortages in the territories, Defense Minister Rabin said that "we will not allow any support form the outside by commodities, not by countries, not by organizations, because there are commodities, and once all the shops will be open, there will be no shortage of any commodity."]

[Gus] Sir, you visited the Al-Jalazun refugee camp this morning and saw the situation there with your own eyes. Do you think that given this situation you can ensure calm and normal commerce and prevent stone-throwing incidents?

[Rabin] Look, the refugee camps have existed for 40 years, of which only 20 have been under our rule. There is no doubt that the situation there must be remedied, but the basic condition for dealing with the problem in any way, whether on the political level—because the problem can be solved only politically, through negotiations...[changes thought] At the same time, however, and perhaps even before this, we must restore calm. I know that many elements in the Arab world, the terrorist organizations, and elements in the territories are doing everything possible to perpetuate the unrest. We are involved in a confrontation with them, but I am sure that in the end we will prove to them that we can overcome. It is too bad that the population suffers as a result. They will achieve nothing by violence.

[Gus] Sir, more than 1,000 people have been detained, but each time a new leadership leads the disturbances. Now there is talk about the United Committee, the United National Committee, et cetera. Can you point to somebody we can talk to?

[Rabin] At this point there is nobody with whom you may talk to reach a political solution. The traditional establishment of mayors and notables finds it difficult to control the situation today. We must maintain our ties with them, we must maintain the Civilian Administration's governing functions—and by the way, it is fully fulfilling its functions. Today, in the face of violence, we will use force and wisdom to secure calm.

[Gus] Sir, there have been several recent visits—that of the UN under secretary general, for example, and the current visit of the Brazilian parliamentary delegation—and people want to send food from Israel to the territories. What do you think of such initiatives?

[Rabin] Let us distinguish between the two things. The UN under secretary general visited the area. He is entitled to that because the United Nations has bodies—such as UNRWA and the United Nations Development Program—in the territories, and we therefore did not prevent his visit.

[Gus] Despite the fact it caused riots?

[Rabin] Certainly. As you witnessed, even my visit has caused a brief gathering. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1200 GMT on 19 January notes that during Rabin's tour of the Al-Jalazun refugee camp today, "stones were thrown at his entourage but nobody was hurt."]

As for visits by parliamentary delegations, I would recommend to a large part of the countries sending parliamentary representatives here that they examine the situation in their own refugee camps. The Brazilian delegation, for example, would do well to examine the shantytowns around Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro before they come to examine the refugee camps here.

General Erez on Calm, Forced Shop Openings

TA181700 Tel Aviv Education Television in Hebrew 1500 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Interview with Brigadier General Yehoshu'a Erez, head of the Civilian Administration in Judaea and Samaria, by Rafi Reshef; live in the studio]

[Text] [Reshef] Brigadier General Erez is our first guest. Good evening to you.

[Erez] Good evening.

[Reshef] So, is it news that after 6 agitated weeks we have now had 2 days of relative calm? Is this the result of attrition, fatigue, the curfews, and the massive presence of IDF troops in the area?

[Erez] It is the result of all of these; of power, dialogue, and fatigue. All these have led to quiet today, but things may look different tomorrow. One cannot hasten to draw any conclusions after 2 days of quiet. After 6 weeks, 2 days do not denote any breakthrough and do not indicate anything. Let us wait and see.

[Reshef] You are being cautious in your assessments about the future. Did you foresee the quiet of the last 2 days or were you surprised by it, as you were at one time surprised by the riots?

[Erez] I do not think 2 days of quiet are surprising. If we take the whole of Judaea and Samaria, we see there were ups and downs during those 6 weeks. The situation is not good, and 2 days of quiet are part of that same situation. Let us wait and see what happens tomorrow morning and the day after. One day does not resemble another, and that is why I think it is too early to infer about the general situation from the last 2 days.

[Reshef] To what extent do you think the decision to open shops by force in several towns contributed to restoring peace?

[Erez] I know there is controversy over the question of opening shops by force. Some think we should let them stew in their own juice, and when the day comes and they cannot take it any more they will open their businesses. I think we should open the shops by force also because shopowners have approached me on this matter. We govern Judaea and Samaria. Whether this is good or bad—this is not the question at the moment. The people do not strike because there is an order to that effect or because they think a strike is good, but because they are being pressured by all sorts of young boys and youth movements who force them to strike.

The businessman who is being forced to strike has a lot to lose. If he defies the pressure and opens his business, they can burn his shop down or do other things to him; there are a lot of threats going around. In view of these threats, when a businessmen wants to open his shop and do business, he must seek protection, and we are the ones who provide it to him. Therefore, by forcefully opening the shops we are signaling that we will protect businessmen, both from other businessmen themselves and from those who try to force them to keep their shops closed.

[Reshef] What you are actually saying, in your capacity as head of the Civilian Administration, is that restoring normal life is more important than dealing with the small groups who try to disrupt it?

[Erez] I think we should do both. We cannot deal with only one aspect and then proceed to deal with another. There are over 400 villages, 25 municipalities, and over 88 rural councils in Judaea and Samaria over an area of 5,800 square kilometers. We should take an overall view of the situation and deal with all its aspects at once. Of course, everything depends on our ability and efforts.

[Reshef] Still, you sound very adamant on the issue of opening the shops. The strikes have been going on and off for some 6 weeks, so why did you only now decide to open the shops by force?

[Erez] First, there have been some ups and downs. On some occasions shops opened and on others they did not; on some occasions we allowed businessmen to close down while on others we made them open. Today we say shops will open in a certain area whereas elsewhere, depending on the circumstances or if there is a holiday, we either do not exert any pressure at all or only just a little. We do that because we have to maintain public order, because shopowners ask us, and because this is part of our daily tasks.

[Reshef] You have said that the riots in Judaea and Samaria are being attributed to groups of youths who are to a certain degree influenced by the PLO, whereas in Gaza they are attributed to radical Muslims. You are very familiar with Gaza after having served a tour there. Did we do wrong when we encouraged radical Muslims as a counterbalance to the PLO?

[Erez] We have never encouraged a group opposed to us to counter the threats of another. The entire system works on both dialogue and force, on understanding and other means. We have never promoted a group that is hostile to us so that it might in turn deal with another group that is also hostile to us. We have never encouraged radical religious groups so that they...

[Reshef, interrupting] Is there a chance that these radical religious groups may penetrate into Judaea and Samaria?

[Erez] I would not like to prophesy, it is very risky to do that at present. There has been a general religious escalation in the Middle East and there is the projection of Iran and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The religious issue was prominent in Gaza even before 1967. The Egyptians legislated laws that reflected their opposition to these religious groups.

We are alert to such a possibility in Judaea and Samaria, and we are familiar with the phenomenon. The religious issue calls for a process, and we try not to encourage it. To say that we are fighting the religious issue is not...

[Reshef, interrupting] And as far as assessments go, you are not even prepared to say what will happen tomorrow. You are pleased about the quiet of the last 2 days, but you are not prepared to say how long this will last, if at all.

[Erez] That is correct.

[Reshef] Brig Gen Erez, I thank you very much.

Maj Gen Mitzna' on Use of Force in Territories

TA201428 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] The use of force to disperse demonstrations is proving itself, said Major General 'Amram Mitzna', commander of the Central Command. It is inconceivable for demonstrations to become a pastime. Here is an excerpt of his remarks:

[Begin recording] When there is a riot, like today, in which youngsters go out into the streets and prevent the merchants from opening their stores, we seize whoever we can; naturally, some of them get beaten up. They should go back home. They should realize that they cannot wake up at 0900 or 1000, usually out of work, and think that they can now indulge in the national pastime of standing around and throwing stones or setting tires on fire, and that nothing will happen to them. So some get beaten up, while others get arrested, detained, and are brought to trial. In this way, forcibly and firmly, we shall do all we can to restore normal life here. [end recording]

Rabin Warns Arabs Against Staging Disturbances

TA211145 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has warned Israeli Arabs not to get swept up into the sort of disturbances witnessed in the territories in the past weeks. He was answering questions about the incidents in Wadi 'Ara and on the coastal road last night. The defense minister, who this morning toured the Rafah area, including the Dayr al-Balah refugee camp, told reporter Alan Ben-'Ami about plans to ease the curfews in the Gaza area:

[Begin recording] [Rabin] The forces of the Southern Command made it possible to bring down violence almost to nil. Now the purpose is to restore the way of life, the tranquil way of life, gradually. The priorities are to allow people to work, to return their children to their schools, and, of course, to open the commercial life. Some people even came up with the story, the false story, that there is hunger in the camps. It's total nonsense.

[Ben-'Ami] How do you explain the fact, then, that a formal body, such as the U.S. State Department, even last night called on Israel to let food supplies, food convoys, into the camps?

[Rabin] Well, I don't know who are the people at Washington that have got the knowledge, with apostrophe, [reference to apostrophe sted quotation marks] about hunger. Better refer to UNRWA people, and they announced yesterday in an interview to the Israeli television that there is no shortage of food in UNRWA stores, once they'll adjust the timing of supplies to the hours of opening of the curfews in the camps. I believe by now it is coordinated. There is no shortage. Other commercial systems are working, and there is no hunger.

[Ben-'Ami] You talked about possibly some new leadership emerging in the areas in the wake of disturbances. Do you have any clear idea who these leaders might be?

[Rabin] I expressed hope that there will be an emergence of a leadership that will come up and say: We are your partners. We are not anymore messengers of the PLO leaders that travel all over the world in five-star hotels and live in villas in the Arab countries. If there will be such a leadership, there will be a partner to serious negotiations between Israel and the leadership of the Palestinians that reside in the territories. [end recording]

More on Policy, Disturbances in Territories

Leaflets Urge W. Bank Action

TA192103 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] Leaflets calling upon inhabitants to stay indoors tomorrow and the next day were distributed throughout Judaea and Samaria today. The idea behind them is to paralyze life in the territories completely. Our correspondent Victor Nahmias reports that commercial life was normal today in almost all parts of Judaea and Samaria. In Ramallah, the security forces ordered merchants to open stores, using force in several cases.

Officials in the Judaea and Samaria Civilian Administration said tonight that a body run by PLO supporters which calls itself the United National Committee for the Organization of the Uprising in the Occupied Territories, is making efforts to disrupt the developing quiet in the territories.

Strike in E. Jerusalem 20 Jan

TA201032 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] A commercial strike is under way today in East Jerusalem and in several places in Judaea and Samaria. The strike in East Jerusalem is general, and small police forces are patrolling the city. The strike in the Judaea and Samaria towns is partial.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0730 GMT on 20 January reports on the general commercial strike in East Jerusalem, adding that "Israeli Arab high school students struck the 1st hour of school this morning in solidarity with the residents of the territories. Our correspondent reports that the campaign of collecting food for the residents of the refugee camps in the territories is continuing in the Arab villages in the Galilee."]

A demonstration was staged in the village of Al-Ram north of Jerusalem at noon. The demonstrators set tires on fire.

Ramallah, Gaza Shops Forced Open

TA201446 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Security forces personnel have been opening shops by force in Ramallah and Gaza to compel their owners to resume business. [Tel Aviv IDF Radio at 1430 GMT adds that "the commander of the Central Command has signed emergency warrants allowing Jerusalem Police to force businessmen in East Jerusalem to open their shops. This has been done despite the fact that, as is known, East Jerusalem is part of the State of Israel.] Crowds of youths who were throwing stones were dispersed in Ramallah.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that Gaza Strip elementary schools have been opening over the last few days. About half of the students in the Gaza Strip have gone back to school, while the rest have not because high schools remain closed. Curfews remain in force in eight refugee camps in the Gaza Strip.

Police Authorized Curfew Powers

TA201602 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Report by police affairs correspondent Shlomi Stein]

[Excerpts] The police will impose curfews on villages in the Jerusalem area if disturbances there continue. The police may even employ this measure in the next few days. This will be made legally possible once the commander of the Central Command signs emergency warrants approving the measure. Police Affairs Minister Hayim Bar-Lev maintains that this will also be applicable to Israeli territory such as East Jerusalem.

[Begin Bar-Lev recording] If the area in question is Israeli territory, we never rush to impose curfews, although it is legally possible—by virtue of an army decree. [end recording]

According to Bar-Lev, Major General 'Amram Mitzna', the commander of the Central Command, has already signed emergency warrants allowing the police to force East Jerusalem businessmen to open their shops.

[Begin Bar-Lev recording] According to the law, the police do not have the authority to order shops opened. The commanders of the various IDF commands do, however, enjoy this prerogative, and it is applicable to Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, or anywhere else. The Jerusalem police have already obtained such warrants, but this is not to say that they are being enforced or that they will be used in the future. [end recording]

Either way, the general commercial strike continued today, as did the disturbances, stone throwing, and tire burning. Twelve rioters have been detained. [passage omitted]

It appears that both the disruptions and the general commercial strike nevertheless failed to stop East Jerusalem residents from arriving at the central post office to collect their national insurance allowances. [passage omitted]

Four leaders of the committee of Arab local council heads conferred with the police affairs minister today, requesting the release of detainees who were arrested on Peace Day [1 January]. Their request was turned down.

'Violent' Riot Near Ramallah

TA191502 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] A youth was wounded a short time ago in the process of a violent riot in the village of Al-Mazra'ah al-Sharqiyah near Ramallah.

The IDF authorities are looking into the circumstances preceding the wounding of the youth.

This was reported by our correspondent Arye Gus.

20 Defendants on Trial in Gaza

TA201719 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] One of the defendants arrested during disturbances in Gaza's Bani Suhaylah was today sentenced to 1 year in prison after being indicted on charges of inciting students to riot. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that riots occurred again in Bani Suhaylah today. Some 20 defendants charged following the wave of riots were brought to trial at the military court in Gaza.

Police Beat Ramallah Resident

TA201729 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] A resident of Ramallah was severely beaten up by border policemen after pelting their car with stones.

Gaza Curfews May Be Lifted

TA201835 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] The army today twice lifted the curfews on Rafah and Dayr al-Balah, and Yitzhaq Mordekhay, commander of the Southern Command, said the move was successful. He hopes that the easing of the curfews would be extended tomorrow to other refugee camps in the Gaza Strip as well. Major General Mordekhay conferred today with notables in the Jabalyah refugee camp, and said that lifting the curfew would depend on quiet being restored.

Conditions Eased for 4 Camps

TA210541 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Curfew conditions in four Gaza Strip refugee camps will be eased as of this morning. In addition to Rafah and Dayr al-Balah, conditions will also be eased in the Khan Yunus and Al-Shatti' refugee camps. Altogether, 100,000 refugees will be affected.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the commander of the Southern Command has ordered that workers from these camps be permitted to depart for work in Israel this morning, and that the breaks in the curfew for buying food be lengthened.

Police Raid Shu'fat 20 Jan

TA202049 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] A female soldier was slightly injured tonight as the Egged bus No 25 on which she was riding along Shu'fat road north of Jerusalem was pelted by stones.

Our correspondent Uri Kohen-Aharonov notes that following the injury last night of an Egged bus driver in the same location, large police forces raided Shu'fat, made arrests, and conducted investigations.

Strike in E. Jerusalem 21 Jan

TA210744 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0730 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] A full commercial strike is under way in East Jerusalem this morning. The police intend to impose curfews on villages in the vicinity of Jerusalem if there are disturbances there. In Samaria, the curfew remains in effect in three places: the town of Salfit and the two 'Askar refugee camps. Most of the shops in Judaea and Samaria were opened this morning.

Stone-Throwing, Beatings

TA210955 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0930 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Five residents of the village of Qabatiyah near Janin arrived at the Janin Hospital last night with broken arms and legs after being beaten up by IDF soldiers on patrol. The soldiers beat the five up after having been pelted with stones.

Stones were thrown at the crew of the U.S. television network CNN this morning. Stones were also thrown at a bus transporting workers. The windows of the vehicles were shattered, but there were no injuries.

A vehicle belonging to the National Kupat Holim medical services was also pelted with stones near Gush 'Ezyon, en route to Qiryat Arba'. The windshield was slightly cracked, but there were no injuries.

Red Cross: No Food Shortages

TA21123 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] The delegate general of the Red Cross in the Middle East, Michel (Amiguet), says there is no food shortage in Palestinian refugee camps in the territories. (Amiguet) met this morning with Foreign Minister Peres in Jerusalem to discuss the situation in the territories. Shlomo Berger reports:

Michel (Amiguet) briefed Peres on Red Cross activities in the Middle East, and expressed satisfaction over the cooperation between the Red Cross and the Foreign Ministry. (Amiguet) said the talks centered on matters of mutual concern in the territories. The meeting comes against the background of foreign criticism of Israel concerning the supply of food to the Palestinian refugee camps. I asked (Amiguet) if indeed there are food shortages in the camps:

[Begin recording] [(Amiguet)] Well, I haven't yet gone myself there, but I haven't got any report which would conclude that there is any lack of food so far. That means, I refer to the reports of our own people present daily in the field, and they have not reported to me that there was urgent need in this field.

[Berger] Does that mean that there is enough food in the camps?

[(Amiguet)] Yes. [end recording]

(Amiguet) also said the Red Cross would continue to pay attention to the fate of the Palestinian population in the present situation. For his part, Foreign Minister Peres raised the issue of Israeli soldiers who are imprisoned and missing.

Deportee Waives Appeal Right

TA211152 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] 'Adil Bashir Hamad [name as heard] from the Qalandiyah refugee camp, who is the fifth candidate for expulsion from Judaea and Samaria, has announced that he is waiving his right to appeal to the High Court of Justice, and is awaiting the commander of the Central Command's decision on the date for his deportation. The above was reported by his attorney, Ibrahim Abu 'Ata, to our correspondent Arye Gus. Hamad decided against appealing to the High Court of Justice in view of the fact that the consultative military committee turned down his appeal against the deportation order.

Bar-Lev Refuses Rioters Release

TA201240 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] The police affairs minister met this afternoon with representatives of the Arab sector and informed them that he cannot agree to their request to release those detained during the Peace Day riots organized by Israeli Arabs. Our correspondent Yaron Enosh reports that Minister Bar-lev said the aim is to bring the rioters to justice.

Hanna Sinyurah on Situation in Territories

TA151636 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (Leshabat Supplement) in Hebrew 15 Jan 88 p 5

[Interview with Hanna Sinyurah, editor in chief of the East Jerusalem daily AL-FAJR, by Ronit Vardi; date and place not given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Question: How would you describe the situation in the territories?

Answer: We have entered a new era where the traditional methods do not work any more.

Question: Why not?

Answer: Thanks to the young generation and as a result of the freeze on the Israeli side.

Question: Did you think all this could have happened 2 months ago?

Answer: No. I was in a pessimistic mood then, because I felt we were being frozen until after the Israeli and U.S. elections. The change came about thanks to people who grew under Israeli occupation and who are not afraid to be killed by Israeli bullets. These people are different from me. They are paying the price of the change with their blood, and they have turned us into believers.

Question: Do you know them personally?

Answer: This generation is made up of anonymous leaders who lack substantial identity, coming from the trade unions, the universities, and the municipal sector. If you detain 10 of them another 100 will replace them. That is why the method of deportation is useless here.

Question: What is the difference between your generation and theirs?

Answer: Our generation was afraid to speak out. I was afraid to speak out loudly and clearly. They are not afraid. This is why we are running after them now.

Question: Do you have any influence over them?

Answer: There is no point of speaking about influence. We should rather speak about cooperation.

Question: How do you intend to change yourself to serve the cause better?

Answer: They sent us a message that it is not enough to attend cocktail parties and to meet diplomats. We have to be more active. This is why I proposed the civil disobedience campaign.

Question: What does it mean to be more active? To become more extremist?

Answer: Yes, and I do not mean this in the military sense. What it means is that we should act instead of speak.

Question: What does that mean?

Answer: We are familiar with the usual Israeli reaction: you retreat into yourselves once the pressure of bloodshed is applied on you. This is what happened in 1982 when Sharon entered Lebanon, with the support of the Labor Party. Within several weeks, however, it became the least popular of all Israeli wars. The dullness of feeling is beginning to be evinced now as well. Shamir, Peres, and Rabin are all burying their heads in the sand. This is why we want to reach the Israeli public's awareness directly.

Question: Does this mean that the new era stems from conclusions you have drawn from the Lebanon War? Will you make our lives miserable until we are forced to leave?

Answer: No. I only gave Lebanon as an example of how this dullness develops among the leadership. This is different from Lebanon, because they were armed, whereas we are unarmed. Our purpose is to turn the occupation into something not worthwhile for the Israelis from the economic point of view. The first stage is to boycott products for which we have alternative sources. The second stage is to stop paying taxes, which would decrease the state revenues by $200 million. If this too fails to help, we will stop working in Israel.

Question: Workers will be imported from Portugal.

Answer: It will cost you double.

Question: This sounds like mutual suicide. What will you live on?

Answer: This is why it is impractical at this point. The occupation will not end tomorrow, and I believe that the international community, and especially the Arab countries will help with contributions and in preparing alternative working places.

Question: Do you believe that the Arab countries will help you?

Answer: This is why I said it is impractical at present.

Question: Are you saying that parallel to the cigarette campaign, the campaign of a violent struggle should continue?

Answer: When the disturbances started, I was abroad, and I believed they would be over in 2-3 weeks. I was mistaken. One must not underestimate the seriousness of these people.

Question: Rabin has called you a "PLO agent."

Answer: Maybe he did this because he did not have a better reaction to the events. In fact everything I do is done in the open. Rabin has to realize he cannot stop the clock. He must be realistic. The people in the territories will not hold back or retreat, just as he and Shamir did not retreat from the British.

Question: If Israel wants to continue holding the West Bank, what should it do with people like you?

Answer: To arrest and imprison me as well as 1 million Palestinians, Israel must be prepared for another war, not just with the Palestinians, but with all the Arab countries.

Question: Who are your supporters? Teddy Kollek claims they can all be crowded into a public telephone box.

Answer: Well, I also heard him say that as a Christian in a Muslim majority I have no supporters. Well, I believe that Kollek is getting too old.

Question: What can we expect to see in the West Bank next week?

Answer: The same thing that is happening now. Unfortunately I think there will be casualties. I believe, however, that the strike will end.

AL-FAJR Publishes Ads Despite Sinyurah Call

TA170524 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] The East Jerusalem AL-FAJR newspaper has resumed publishing advertisements for Israeli products despite the call earlier this month by AL-FAJR editor Hanna Sinyurah for civil disobedience, which began with a boycott of Israeli cigarettes.

Bethlehem Mayor Says PLO Palestinians' Choice

TA161959 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Interview with Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj by television correspondent Gil Sadan; date and place not given—recorded in English with Hebrew subtitles]

[Text] Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj says there is no chance to establish an independent local leadership in the territories and that there is no alternative to the PLO's leadership. Frayj, who is considered to be one of the most moderate notables in the territories, reacted with these words to the remarks made by Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin that it is possible that after the disturbances in the territories end a new Arab leadership will emerge in the territories. Our correspondent Gil Sadan spoke with Ilyas Frayj:

[Begin recording] [Sadan] Mr Rabin said this week that maybe after the area calms down we shall find a new kind of leadership. What do you think of that?

[Frayj] I disagree with this. There is no political Arab local leadership, none whatsoever. All the Arab governments are united in their support that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and any local leadership will be rejected by the Arab governments, by the Arab people all over the world, and they will be considered as collaborators. So the idea of having a local leadership is really not a possibility. Also Israeli threats against anybody who really speaks out freely or tries to promote even nonviolent resistance are nothing new. So the local leadership are between two crushing stones, we are being crushed.

[Sadan] What can be done now, immediate steps that need to be taken in order to restore order to the area?

[Frayj] The heavy hand policy, deportations, detentions, will not resolve the problem. What is required is an immediate, courageous, magnanimous Israeli offer for real peace, real peace. Because there is a consensus among the Palestinian people, the Jordanians and all the Arabs almost, to make peace with Israel, with the state of Israel and with the people of Israel on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338. [end recording]

Reservists Replacing Regulars in Territories

TA181236 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 Jan 88 p 1

[Report by defense reporter Joshua Brilliant]

[Text] Tel Aviv—The IDF is planning to send more reservists to the West Bank and Gaza Strip to replace some of the regular Army units deployed there in the past six weeks, an authoritative military source told THE JERUSALEM POST last night.

The main reason for sending more reservists to the territories is to lessen the damage the policing duties has done to regular army units.

The deployment of troops in the territories has affected IDF courses. The IDF is more sensitive about training its regular troops than its reservists.

There will be no change in the duration of a soldier's reserve duty, the source also said.

'Peace Now' Protests Policy in Territories

TA171247 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] Opposite the Prime Minister's Office, the Peace Now Movement has been holding a demonstration marking the beginning of a week of activities protesting the events in the territories. At the demonstration this morning was reporter David Ze'ev.

[Begin recording] [Ze'ev] Some 30 Peace Now supporters have been braving the changeable winter weather since Prime Minister Shamir arrived at his office this morning. Peace Now has scheduled a week of activities ending Saturday night with a rally in Tel Aviv. On Wednesday, a group of middle-rank army officers will speak on behalf of the movement on the situation in the territories. Does Peace Now believe that Israelis should reconsider serving in the territories? A question posed to spokesman Tzali Reshef.

[Reshef] I think you should always reconsider everything. But the decision of our movement has been so far not to take steps which are part of civil disobedience or that kind of move. Our decision right now is to obey the laws and to go even to the West Bank when required. But

we think it's our duty simultaneously to fight against the situation there, and to try to bring about a situation where people will not have to go to the West Bank.

[Ze'ev] Nearby, less than 10 supporters of Meir Kahane's KAKH Movement have been holding a counter demonstration. One KAKH member said he and his colleagues would attend all Peace Now activities this week so that their own positions will be known as well. [end recording]

Mubarak Sends Message to Peres on Territories

TA191317 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1155 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] A message from Egyptian President Husni Mubarak reached the office of the vice prime minister and foreign minister 30 minutes ago. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami has learned details about this message already. Go ahead, 'Oded:

[Ben-'Ami] Yes. This verbal message was brought by Egyptian Ambassador Basyuni to the foreign minister's office. Ambassador Basyuni has spent quite a lot of time on the Tel-Aviv-Jerusalem line lately, visiting both the Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry. This morning he arrived at the foreign minister's office, carrying a message in which President Mubarak expressed regret and concern about the latest incidents, especially last Friday's incidents on Temple Mount.

In the message President Mubarak also agrees with the foreign minister that there is an urgent need now to promote the peace process in order to break the deadlock. In Mubarak's opinion, this is possible to accomplish only through the international conference which will lead to direct negotiations, as the message has it. President Mubarak has rejected all alternative proposals, since, in his opinion, these proposals will yield nothing but another delay in the peace process. This is surely compatible with the foreign minister's positions.

Incidentally, in the course of the very brief conversation which the ambassador and the foreign minister held they discussed the incidents at the Temple Mount last Friday. The foreign minister explained the need to introduce policemen into the area at that time.

As for the message and its content again, there is a repetition of President Mubarak's position. He writes that it is possible to promote the peace process only through an international conference which will lead to direct negotiations according to the formula agreed upon between them.

Shamir 'Astonished' at Message

TA201538 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
20 Jan 88 pp 1, 4

[Report by Gid'on Alon]

[Excerpts] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak has rejected Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's call for the resumption of autonomy talks. [passage omitted]

Sources in the Prime Minister's Office have expressed astonishment at the content of Mubarak's message to Shim'on Peres. The sources maintain that in a 6 January interview with a Kuwaiti newspaper, Mubarak said he regretted the fact that Egypt had brought about a halt in the autonomy talks. "We are sorry to hear Mubarak send double messages," the sources said, adding that "he uses one language when he talks to Peres, and another in the press interview." These sources say that despite Mubarak's remarks, the prime minister is prepared to launch the political process with the participation of Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and a Palestinian representation once quiet prevails in the territories.

Political Sources 'Fear' New U.S. Plan

TA170915 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew
17 Jan 88 p 1

[Report from Jerusalem by the political correspondent]

[Text] Political circles in Jerusalem have expressed the fear that the United States might be working on a new political plan for the Middle East.

Jerusalem has gotten word that the State Department was drafting plans for a new Middle East move that could, theoretically, help ease the tension in the area.

It should be pointed out that the Reagan plan was conceived after the first stage of the Lebanon war. The new U.S. initiative could be developed after the first phase of the unrest.

Gerasimov Views Delegation, Relations, PLO

TA201223 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1105 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Soviet Foreign Ministry Spokesman Gennadiy Gerasimov says that Israel should decide on the date of its diplomatic delegation's visit to Moscow. The members of the delegation will be able to meet with everyone in the Soviet capital, Gerasimov says, even Arabs they will encounter on the city's streets. In a talk with our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami, Gerasimov addresses himself to events in the territories and to Yosef Begun's arrival in Israel last night.

[Begin recording] [Ben-'Ami] As is his wont lately, Gerasimov welcomes every conversation with us. On the goals of the Israeli diplomatic delegation's work in Moscow, he said this morning that it will examine the operation of the department that represents Israel in the Netherlands Embassy in Moscow.

[Gerasimov in English] The purpose of the visit, as stated in the request from your Foreign Office, is to have a look at the section of the Netherlands Embassy here in Moscow which looks after the interests of your country here in Moscow. And what is this section doing? This section is busy with all these visas to Israel.

[Ben-'Ami] I asked Gerasimov if the Israeli diplomats will be able to meet Jews in the USSR?

[Gerasimov in English] If they are going to be here, they will be walking in the streets; they can meet everybody, even Arabs.

[Ben-'Ami] I asked about the possibility of Israeli journalists, such as myself, coming to Moscow to cover the work of the delegation.

[Gerasimov in English] Well, you just apply for visa. Lack of diplomatic relations does not prevent journalists from traveling. Of course it doesn't help, but it doesn't prevent it. You may try, certainly. You may certainly try.

[Ben-'Ami] I asked Gerasimov about the possibility of resuming diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, and his answer is well known:

[Gerasimov in English] Just now in the Soviet Union we are very unhappy really. The majority of our population is unhappy with some of, with all those things you do to Palestinians and the violation of their human rights, you know, all this. You know that.

[Ben-'Ami] Gerasimov says that diplomatic relations can come only after settling the Middle East problem. So, for example, he said that most of the Soviet population is dissatisfied with the things that are being done to the Palestinians: the violation of human rights, police shooting at the Palestinians, and the deportation policy. I asked him about PLO terrorist activities: Why do the Soviets not condemn them as well?

[Gerasimov in English] As to the activities of PLO, I cannot accept this . The problem is much deeper than you suggest it is, because this is the problem of the human rights of Palestinians, because they want their land back. Let this people go.

[Ben-'Ami] In conclusion, I mentioned Yosef Begun's arrival in Tel Aviv from Moscow last night.

[Gerasimov in English] So, give to him a good welcome. [end recording]

Gerasimov: Visit Marks No 'Closening of Ties'

TA201228 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Excerpt] Soviet Foreign Ministry Spokesman Gennadiy Gerasimov says the Soviet decision to allow an Israeli delegation to visit Moscow does not mark a closening of ties between the two countries. Gerasimov was speaking in an interview with Israel Radio. More from reporter David Ze'ev.

[Begin recording] [Ze'ev] The Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman said the Israeli delegation would be limited in its activities to checking the operations at the section of the Dutch Embassy which looks after Israeli interests. He spoke by phone from Moscow with reporter 'Oded Ben-'Ami. He said the decision to allow the Israelis to come to the Soviet Union did not represent a move towards establishing diplomatic relations.

[Gerasimov] No, as I said at my briefing yesterday, this has nothing to do with the establishing of diplomatic relations. Our standard answer to this question is that the restoration of diplomatic relations must come parallel with the settlement of Middle East question, Middle East crisis. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Ben-Aharon on Soviet Ties, Political Issues

TA201312 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Telephone interview with Yosi Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, by Mikha Friedman and Ilana Dayan—live; place not given]

[Excerpts] [Dayan] Yosi Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, good morning. Were you surprised by the Soviet announcement as relayed to Novik?

[Ben-Aharon] No, I think the time has come...[changes thought] Even the Soviets understood that after its 6-month stay, especially after they heard from us at the outset that we want reciprocity, they must do something to grant us a minimum of reciprocity.

[Friedman] Nimrod Novik, the Israeli interlocutor of the Soviets, does not disavow the principle of reciprocity, but he also emphasizes that there is a somewhat greater political context to this Soviet agreement for an Israeli delegation visit to Moscow, such as greater Soviet involvement in the political process.

[Ben-Aharon] I do not think this is an entry ticket for Soviet involvement in the political process. First, as the prime minister said to Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko years ago, when he was still foreign minister, diplomatic relations are a channel of communication, no more nor less. Their establishment is not a favor, and their absence is not a punishment.

[Dayan] You do not seriously think that the Soviets surrendered to an Israeli ultimatum without expecting anything in return, such as Israeli readiness for an international conference?

[Ben-Aharon] No, I cannot conceive of them expecting anything in return. They assuredly want to create the impression of some Soviet flexibility or moderation, but the road is still long. We first want them to treat us as a normal state, to have normal relations with us, just as they maintain diplomatic relations with countries engaged in various alliances aimed against the Soviet Union; this should apply to us, too. Afterward, there can be a sincere and true dialogue on the appropriate level.

And afterward, if they can make a contribution to promoting the peace process in the Middle East, we will see. In the meantime, their contribution is quite unilaterally huge quantities of arms to Syria, support for the PLO, and everything else that is known.

[Friedman] Speaking of promoting peace negotiations in the Middle East, let me ask you: President Mubarak rejects Yitzhaq Shamir's idea of resuming the autonomy talks, saying that such ideas will yield nothing but another delay in the peace process. Do our prime minister and his director general have new or other ideas?

[Ben-Aharon] Look, this is not a chess game. We are not making moves on a chessboard, advancing a pawn and then rethinking our moves when faced with a no on his part. This is not the case. We adhere to direct negotiations not out of stubbornness and not because we believe that preserving the status quo is a good solution, but because we believe that nothing lasting can be established in any way other than through direct negotiations, with one person looking directly into his interlocutor's eyes and understanding what the interlocutor is prepared to give in exchange for what he is prepared to give. This should be done quietly and persistently until an agreement is reached, with neither side getting up from the negotiations table before an agreement is reached. [passage omitted]

[Friedman] Would you welcome a special U.S. envoy who may come to Israel to preserve the peace process? We understand that the Foreign Ministry's political director general is acting to bring this about.

[Ben-Aharon] Allow me to say the following. The Israeli Government has never decided that it wants additional U.S. involvement in the peace process. If anybody entertains such thoughts, these are his thoughts alone. We maintain close, good, and intimate ties with the U.S. Government in order to exchange views. If necessary, we will welcome U.S. involvement aimed at mediation, at bringing the sides closer, but not involvement that entails the presentation of U.S. initiatives, not involvement in which the United States presents initiatives of its own.

[Friedman] Yosef Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, thank you very much.

[Ben-Aharon] Thank you.

Parliamentary Delegation Departs for EC Talks

TA170900 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0830 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] Despite fears of anti-Israeli reaction in Europe to events in the territories, a Knesset delegation headed by Speaker Shlomo Hilel left for Strasbourg this morning to participate in the biannual discourse between the European Parliament and the Knesset.

Our correspondent Yinon Shenkar reports that the delegation includes Knesset Members 'Uzi Landau, Yitzhaq Artzi, and Yuval Ne'eman. The delegation is scheduled to hold talks on a series of subjects, including the situation in the territories, although it is already clear that the European Parliament will not ratify the economic agreements signed between Israel and the EEC this week.

Milo Hopes To Prevent Debate

TA201452 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Deputy Minister Roni Milo will leave for Strasbourg where he will try to prevent the Council of Europe from discussing the events in the territories. Our political affairs correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that numerous Council members have demanded that the debate regarding the Gulf war be postponed in order to hold an urgent discussion concerning the territories.

Sofer, Raimond Discuss EC Vote

TA201652 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 20 Jan 88 p 3

[Report by correspondent in France Arnon Yafe and news agencies]

[Excerpt] The French foreign minister conferred yesterday with Israeli Ambassador 'Ovadya Sofer, telling him that France has initiated a cautious and moderate approach toward events in the territories. Sofer asked for the meeting with the foreign minister after the latter received Arab delegations, and in view of the fact that France voted in favor of the Security Council resolutions denouncing Israel. Sofer urged France not to take steps or decisions against Israel next week in the European Community's Council of Foreign Ministers meeting, saying that such steps would encourage the rioters in the territories. "Arab countries are pressuring EC members to impose sanctions on Israel," Sofer said. [passage omitted]

Brazilians' Visit to Territories Protested

TA160532 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] A delegation of 15 Brazilian congressmen has left for Israel on a study mission to investigate the disturbances in the territories. The Israel Embassy spokesman in Brazil, Dori Goren, said the embassy complained about the visit to the Brazilian Government, calling it inopportune, unconstructive, and an interference in Israel's domestic affairs, but the embassy denied a report in the JORNAL DO BRASIL newspaper that Foreign Minister Peres telephoned Brasilia to express his official displeasure at the planned visit.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 16 January adds that "the Israeli ambassador in Brasilia added that the delegation members will tour the

territories as tourists for all intents and purposes, and will be subordinate to instructions from Israeli officers in the area. One of the delegation members said, however, that the visitors are bearing diplomatic passports and plan to review the events in the territories without succumbing to what he called threats or intimidation."]

Security Forces Capture 'Terrorist' Squad

TA201051 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1030 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] The security forces recently captured a terrorist squad whose members tried to murder a soldier in August 1986. In the incident, Yosef Levi, 46, a reserve soldier from Kibbutz Usha, hitched a ride from Hamovil junction near Kibbutz Hasolelim. The terrorists who were in the car tried to stab him with a knife. They succeeded in wounding him, but he managed to escape. Our correspondent Menahem Horowitz reports that the police captured two suspects in this case from the village of (Sur Bahr) in the East Jerusalem area and from Nazareth. A third suspect managed to flee to Egypt.

Three Suspects Named

TA201238 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] The security forces have uncovered a terrorist grouping by people from Nazareth and the village of Sur Bahir near Jerusalem. The members of the squad had planned to attack members of the security forces. The affair was uncovered through the investigation into the attempted murder of a reserve soldier. Three suspects were detained, and a fourth fled to Egypt. Our correspondent Shula Shmerling reports the following details about the affair:

[Passage omitted] In the course of the investigation conducted following the incident, it transpired that a terrorist organizing that meant to attack members of the security forces was involved. The three suspects are Najah Da'ud Bakirat, 30, from East Jerusalem; Husayn Ahmad Mu'ad, 33, from Nazareth; and 'Abd al-Ra'uf Abu al-Hijah, 23, who serves as an imam in a Nazareth mosque. The indictment against them will be submitted shortly.

Peres Explains Need for Early Elections

TA181643 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Text] There is room to call for early elections, Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres stated today. The Alignment will begin to hold contacts on this issue in the coming days. Our correspondent Qobi Mandel accompanied Peres' tour in Qiryat Ata today.

[Begin recording] [Mandel] The disagreements within the government against the background of incidents in the territories do not leave any more room for joint participation in it, according to Shim'on Peres. Action should then be taken to advance elections.

[Peres] One should check whether this move would muster a Knesset majority and how early elections could be held. This matter will be examined.

[Mandel] Have you contacted other parties already?

[Peres] Not yet. We shall do so in the coming days.

[Mandel] The vice prime minister also explains the desire for early elections.

[Peres] I see how Israel loses one position after another overseas. We are losing friends and support. An atmosphere of large opposition to the State of Israel is beginning to develop. Nobody can correct this except us. It is about time that the so-called political echelon no longer hide behind the military one. [end recording]

Shamir Rejects Proposal

TA190952 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Jan 88 pp 1, 9

[Report by Menahem Shalev and Ya'aqov Friedler]

[Text] Prime Minister Shamir yesterday dismissed Foreign Minister Peres's proposal that elections be held within 90 days.

An election war at this time, Shamir said, would "damage Israel and weaken it in the eyes of the Arabs."

"We must first rebuff and fight the rioters, return order to the territories, and only then take time to arrange things between ourselves," Shamir said.

Labour Party circles expressed scepticism last night whether Peres's enthusiasm for early elections, voiced yesterday in Qiryat Ata, where he was granted the freedom of the city, would indeed result in an earlier ballot date.

Labour is wary of "repeating last summer's disgrace," party sources said, referring to the party's widely publicized failure to persuade other parties to support early elections.

More disconcerting for Labour, however, is the possibility that even if a parliamentary majority for early elections could be secured, the Likud could exploit parliamentary maneuvers in order to postpone them until summer. July and August are thought by some observers to be an advantageous period for the Likud because many Labour voters are abroad at the time.

Peres is "toying" with the idea of early elections, sources close to the foreign minister said last night, but he has yet to decide to initiate a move in that direction.

Peres said yesterday that he would evaluate the situation in the Knesset in the next few days. He added that the differences of opinion on the situation in the territories had made it pointless to keep the coalition alive.

Shamir remains steadfastly opposed to early elections. However, he has appointed former minister Moshe Arens to head the Likud's election campaign and is expected in the near future to formally announce his intention to head the Likud Knesset list once again.

The Tehiya Party has stated that it will introduce a bill for early elections. But Labour fears that any enthusiasm it shows in favour of the motion will be exploited by Tehiya to extract concessions from Shamir on additional funds for settlements in the territories.

'Thousands' Demonstrate for Constitution
TA170534 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Excerpt] Last night in Tel Aviv, thousands of people demonstrated on behalf of electoral reform and the establishment of a constitution in Israel. The demonstration was in support of direct elections and the creation of a bill of rights. More from Sabra Chartrand:

[Begin recording] Some 5,000 people—some of them from Histadrut's workers councils and others from national youth movements but most ordinary citizens unconnected with any organization—gathered in Tel Aviv's municipal square last night. The rally was supposed to be held beneath a banner reading: Israelis for Human Rights and Electoral Reforms, but rain drove the gathering under a nearby plaza.

Prof Uri'el Reichmann, dean of the Tel Aviv University Law Faculty and the force behind the drive for a constitution, advocated the legislation of civil rights and direct elections of the prime minister. He said under electoral reforms, 50 percent of Knesset members will be directly elected in districts, and 50 percent will be elected under the present system. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Syrians To Replace Amal Forces Around Camps

JN201245 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] In Beirut last night, Amal and Palestinian organizations agreed on lifting Amal's 32-month military siege of the refugee camps in Beirut. The Syrian-sponsored agreement implements the call made by Amal leader Minister Nabih Birri in solidarity with the uprising in the occupied territory.

The seven-point agreement provides for beginning the withdrawal of Amal fighters and men of the Lebanese Army's 6th Brigade from the area surrounding the Burj al-Barajinah, Sabra, and Shatila camps as of this afternoon, with the Syrian forces deployed in East Beirut taking up their positions.

Amal Begins Withdrawal

NC201401 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Excerpt] [Passage ommitted] Amal sources have affirmed that withdrawal from the camps began at 1400 today and that Syrian forces have begun to occupy the positions being evacuated .

Syrian Deployment Starts

NC201251 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] According to security reports from West Beirut, the Syrian occupation forces deployed patrols in the areas surrounding the Shatila, Sabra, and Burj al-Barajinah camps and set up stationary observation points near some of the main road junctions this morning.

Committees Supervise Withdrawal

NC201426 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] The agreement on the withdrawal from the Burj al-Barajinah and Shatila camps is being put into effect. This afternoon units from the Amal Movement and the 6th Brigade began withdrawing under the supervision of joint committees from Amal, Palestinian groups, and Syrian forces. According to Palestinian sources, the withdrawal will end at 1700, at which time Syrian troops will take up positions in and around the camps.

Amal, Syrian Moves Detailed

NC201607 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] According to an Amal Movement source, the withdrawal of Amal personnel from the vicinity of the Shatila camp and the process of replacing them with Syrian forces ended at 1630 today. Meanwhile, the withdrawal from the Burj al-Barajinah camp has begun now with Syrian forces taking up positions there.

At 0900 today, the Syrian forces began deploying on the Kuwaiti Embassy road and the Shatila axis, reaching as far as the Airport Road and Burj al-Barajinah camp.

Meanwhile, a meeting is scheduled to be held at the headquarters of the Syrian observers commander, Brigadier General 'Ali Hammud, at 1800 today. The meeting will be attended by representatives of Palestinian factions who arrived from Damascus today, as well as by representatives of the Amal Movement.

It has been learned that the Syrian forces will deploy inside and around the camps.

A military source in the Amal Movement in the south has stated that the Movement began to pull out its forces deployed in the area east of Sidon at 0900 today. The source added: Amal will retain only observation posts in the area. Thus, the Movement will have eliminated any possibility for future tension. Furthermore, positions in the Al-Rashidiyah camp in Tyre have been evacuated, the source said.

Syrians Declare Military Zone

NC201801 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] The security of the Palestinian camps in Beirut today became the responsibility of the Syrian forces.

The Syrian forces command in West Beirut has declared the area extending from the Shatila circle to the airport, including the Kuwaiti Embassy, Hursh Beirut, and Sabra, a military zone in which the carrying of arms is forbidden.

Brigadier General 'Ali Hammud, head of the Syrian observers team, has told AFP that the task of his forces is to guarantee the security of the camps, not to surround them for a long time.

Syrian Deployment Completed

JN201846 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] At 1715 today, the Syrian Arab forces completed their deployment to the points assigned to them in the Burj al-Barajinah and Shatila camps and their environs in Beirut, amid great welcome by the sons of the two camps. This deployment came after all armed manifestations have been removed and armed men have completely withdrawn from the points that were a source of tension in the two camps. As of 1700 today, anyone seen bearing arms will be arrested.

Klibi Applauds Moves

LD201433 Tunis TAP in Arabic 1317 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Tunis, 20 Jan (TAP)—Chedli Klibi, secretary general of the Arab League, has addressed a message to Nabih Birri, leader of the Lebanese Amal Movement, in which he pointed out that the decision to lift the siege on Palestinian camps in Lebanon was greatly appreciated. He added: While rejoicing at this historic decision, we thank you for your honorable pan-Arab stand, which will help to consolidate the solidarity of brothers in arms and turn the bayonets against the usurper occupier. We also view your decision as a salute to and support for the Palestinian people's uprising in the occupied territories.

Envoy Lauds Action, Forecasts 'Soviet Move'

NC201349 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Soviet Ambassador to Lebanon Vasiliy Kolotusha met with Amal Movement leader Nabih Birri today. Their discussion focused on the camps issue and developments in Lebanon, particulary in the south.

In a statement after the meeting, Ambassador Kolotusha said he had been briefed by Minister Birri on the decision [by Amal] to withdraw from the Palestinian camps' periphery. He expressed his satisfaction over this gesture and hoped that it would further improve relations between Amal and the Palestinians. In response to a question, the Soviet envoy added that coming days will witness a Soviet move with respect to the Middle East.

Iranian Denies 'Guards' Linked to Hostages

NC201245 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] 'Ali Asghar Mohammadi, political adviser at the Iranian Embassy in Lebanon, has denied that the Iranian Revolution Guards in Lebanon have any connection with the issue of the foreign hostages.

Al-Turk Confers With Iranian Diplomat

LD201823 Tehran IRNA in English 1735 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Beirut, Jan. 20, IRNA—Political attache of Iran's Embassy in Beirut Asghar Mohammadi conferred with Lebanon's Foreign Ministry Secretary-General Fu'ad al-Turk here Wednesday on current regional developments, as well as the Zionist regime's aggressive acts and the U.S. support for such felonies.

At the end of the meeting, Mohammadi told IRNA that views were exchanged on the latest developments in Lebanon as well as Tehran-Lebanon ties.

The meeting deplored Washington's vetoing of the U.N. Security Council resolution against the Zionist regime motioned by Lebanon.

Al-Turk Invited To Visit

NC201551 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] 'Ali Asghar Mohammadi, political adviser at the Iranian Embassy in Beirut, renewed Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Besharati's invitation to the Lebanese Foreign Ministry's secretary general to visit Iran in February. Earlier in the day, the Iranian Embassy diplomat met with Ambassador Fu'ad al-Turk to discuss the agenda of the visit.

After the meeting, Muhammadi was asked to comment on foreign news agency reports that the remaining foreign hostages in Lebanon are being held by Iranian Revolution Guards. He replied: I would like the foreign news agencies to ask: In 1982, who kidnapped Iranian Charge d'Affaires Musa al-Musawi and three other diplomats, who are still in captivity? He denied that the Iranian Revolution Guards are involved with the hostages.

Islamic Groups Call for Strike 22 Jan

NC201506 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] A joint meeting of members of the Islamic Grouping and the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council was held at the mufti's office at noon today. The meeting was called to decide on a date for a strike in both Arab and Islamic countries to show solidarity with the uprisings in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and with the resistance in the south.

After the meeting, a statement was issued and read by mufti of the Republic Shaykh Hasan Khalid. The statement appealed to all officials, able-bodied people, and citizens in the Islamic and Arab worlds to take a unified stand of esteem and pride and stage a general strike next Friday for the whole world to witness. This strike will prove to the agents the unity and cohesion of Arab and Islamic nations.

After reading the statement, Mufti Khalid chaired the meeting of the Islamic Grouping, which was adjourned at 1315 without a communique being released.

Al-Huss Cancels Activities; 'Ill Health' Cited

NC210909 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Acting Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss has canceled his engagements for today because of ill health. His office telephoned the Chamber of Deputies Secretariat General to apologize for his inability to attend the joint meeting of the parliamentary Foreign Affairs and Defense Committees.

PLO Spokesman on Clash Near Qiryat Shemona

NC201414 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Excerpts] A fedayeen group attacked a position manned by the Israeli occupation forces in the area of Ramim near Qiryat Shemona during the night. [passage omitted]

An official spokesman for the PLO in the Sidon area has issued the following statement on the operation:

In implementation of the instructions of the commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces to escalate armed struggle inside the occupied territories, and in accordance with the orders given in this respect, the Palestinian Return-to-the-Homeland squad of the Bayt al-Mqlis Battalion in the Fatah Movement proceeded to the Qiryat Shemona area after conducting accurate reconnaissance and crossing a mine field, barbed wire, and alarm sites. Upon reaching the hills overlooking Qiryat Shemona, precisely 800 meters to the south, our fighters were chased by enemy patrols. At 0100, our fighters engaged the enemy patrols, using all kinds of weapons. The enemy brought in reinforcements, helicopters, and warplanes, dropping flares in the area. The fighting erupted anew at 0300 and lasted until 0500. Our fighters inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy.

According to eyewitnesses, the helicopters continued evacuating enemy casualties until this morning. The enemy confirmed the operation, saying that one of its soldiers had been killed and another wounded. Lieutenant Hisham As'ad Ward, Muhsin Kamil [last name indistinct], and Hasan Muhammad Hubbu were martyred during the operation.

Israeli Planes Overfly South, Mountain, Beirut

NC201557 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1515 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Six Israeli Mirages today flew over areas in the south, the mountain, and Beirut at medium altitude. The aircraft drew antiaircraft fire while flying over Al-Damur, 'Alayh, Khaldah, and the perimeter of Beirut Airport.

Overflights of Sidon, Tyre

NC202056 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 2045 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Israeli warplanes resumed their flights over the Sidon and Tyre areas, dropping flares. Israeli aircraft flew over these areas earlier this evening.

Resistance Attacks Joint Israeli-Lahd Patrol

NC201634 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] According to reports from the occupied areas, national resistance men firing machineguns attacked a joint foot patrol of the Israeli occupation forces and the agent Lahd militia near the town of Kunin in the central sector today. Immediately afterward, enemy forces using machineguns and mortars began to rake the area. There has been no report on casualties thus far.

Further Attacks Reported

NC210700 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] In the south yesterday, the resistance carried out three operations against the Israeli occupation forces and Lahd's militias east of Kafr Rumman, Kunin, and the Mimis-al-Mrayyah junction. Israeli artillery shelled north Hasbayya and western Al-Biqa' villages opposite the security zone.

The Islamic Resistance claimed responsibility for an operation against an enemy patrol east of Kafr Rumman. It issued a statement saying: The martyr Hasan al-Haj 'Ali Group of the Islamic Resistance detonated an explosive device when a Zionist enemy patrol was passing along the Kafr Rumman road between Al-Tahirah and Al-Suwayda', completely destroying an armored personnel carrier and killing all six of its occupants. The group returned safely to base.

Ambassador to U.S. Interviewed

PM191545 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 15 Jan 88 pp 16, 17

[Interview with Lebanese Ambassador to the United States 'Abdallah Abu Habib by Subhi Ghandur in Washington; date not given]

[Excerpts] AL-HAWADITH: Regional issues were the last to be discussed at the Washington [USSR-U.S.] summit. The Lebanese issue was last among such issues. So, how do you expect the summit talks to reflect on the situation in Lebanon?

Abu Habib: Any international or regional understanding is beneficial to Lebanon. This is because the war in Lebanon reflects both international and regional differences. In my opinion, existing international understanding will eventually be in the interest of Lebanon. But such understanding has not yet been accompanied by regional understanding or an improvement in regional circumstances surrounding Lebanon, which would consequently improve the situation in the country. [passage omitted]

AL-HAWADITH: The Washington summit discussed both the Gulf war and an international conference on the Middle East, but the two parties reached no agreement on either issue. Some believe that a solution to the Lebanese crisis will be a third step in the future, after the Gulf war and the Middle East crisis. So how do you expect Washington summit differences to reflect on the Lebanese crisis?

Abu Habib: Basically the Middle East crisis was not discussed in depth. What happened was an exchange of views in this regard. As for the Gulf war, I do not believe the two major countries actually want a solution to the problem. I do not see any genuine or practical efforts to end the Gulf war. The Soviet Union is not enthusiastic enough with regard to the implementation of Resolution 598 or other measures relating to an embargo or sanctions. The United States, if it wants to, can exert more pressure on Iran by urging the West to cease buying Iranian oil, most of which goes to these states.

While it is difficult to control the operation of smuggling and selling arms to Iran through arms dealers spread throughout the world, it is possible to stop Iran's source of finance—the sale of oil—which is used for the purchase of arms. Therefore, I believe neither the Americans nor the Soviets are truly serious in seeking to end the Gulf war.

Furthermore, the matter as we see it is not with the set of priorities with respect to solutions in the region. The problem is not with solving the Lebanese crisis before or after other crises. What is happening in Lebanon is an extension of other crises; namely, the Middle East and the Gulf war. The Lebanese crisis can be resolved away from that. It can be resolved internally by the Lebanese meeting, agreeing, and working toward curbing foreign factors, be they international or regional, that is, the Gulf war and the Middle East. Ending the Gulf war first would undoubtedly help to facilitate a solution to the Lebanese crisis. The same applies to the Arab-Israeli conflict, if it is to be solved first. There are numerous keys to a solution to the Lebanese crisis but we have in our hands one key, that is, the internal key. We can, through an agreement with Syria, separate the Lebanese crisis from the Middle East crisis. [passage omitted]

AL-HAWADITH: I learned from a Syrian political source that Vernon Walters' recent visit to Damascus dealt with the possibility of separating the Lebanese crisis from the Middle East crisis, which Syria wants and is interested in. What information do you have about the U.S. position?

Abu Habib: Basically this matter concerns a U.S. policy aimed at separating the Lebanese crisis from the Middle East crisis. I do not speak for the Americans. However, my understanding of their position is that they are helping in finding a solution to the Lebanese problem on both sides, the Lebanese-Lebanese and the Lebanese-Syrian. The U.S. position supports the existence and expansion of the Lebanese state from the north right to what is known as the border line or the security belt. And if true security prevails, the United States would be willing to exert pressure on Israel to withdraw from the border line, and then control security in coordination with UN forces. But as an official state is absent in the south [of Lebanon], the United States says it cannot pressure Israel to withdraw. Israeli as well as U.S. attempts have been made to secure a dialogue between Israel and the Amal Movement regarding the south, but, according to my information, Minister Nabih Birri has rejected the idea.

AL-HAWADITH: Do you mean that the Americans agreed to negotiations between Israel and the militias as an alternative to negotiations with the Lebanese state?

Abu Habib: This was requested by Israel. The United States expressed willingness to convey viewpoints. But Minister Birri refused, and I consider that to be a clever step, since no one cares about Lebanon's interests except the Lebanese. The United States is looking after its own interests, Israel is looking after its own interests, and Syria is looking after its own interests. This is their duty because every country should care about its own interests first.

AL-HAWADITH: So how do you explain this contradiction in the U.S. position, which on one hand talks of the need for the existence and expansion of the official state yet agrees to discuss Israel's request for bilateral negotiations and agreements with the militias in Lebanon on the other?

Abu Habib: The U.S. position considers Minister Birri legitimate by virtue of his position as a member in the Lebanese Government and his responsibility for the Ministry of the South. On this basis the United States accepted the Israeli request. [passage omitted]

AL-HAWADITH: What is the fate of Lebanese debts owed to the United States, being the price of arms for the Lebanese Army, and what stage has U.S. aid for Lebanon reached?

Abu Habib: Lebanese military debts amount to nearly $100 million, which is nothing in comparison with debts owed by other states, which run into billions. Talks have been suspended until major debts owed by friendly states are rescheduled. When a formula is reached, it would then be possible to reschedule the relatively small Lebanese debts. As for the subject of U.S. aid to Lebanon, it assumes various forms and does not come all at once. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Najibullah Condolences on Death of Ghafar Khan

LD201258 Kabul BAKHTAR in Pashto 1130 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Excerpts] Kabul, 20 Jan (BAKHTAR)—Announcement by the President's Office:

The Office of the President of the Republic of Afghanistan reports that esteemed Afghan President Najibullah, with much sorrow, has been informed that the great Pashtun leader, the indefatigable struggler of the path of peace, freedom, and justice, and the outstanding national personality and Fakhr-e [Pride of] Afghans, Khan 'Abdul Ghafar Khan, died this morning at 0640 Peshawar time at Lady Rading Hospital, Pashtunkhwa Peshawar, as a result of an illness he had suffered from for the past 6 months. [passage omitted]

The president convened a session of the party and state personalities in which it was decided that Pacha Khan, in accordance with his will, should be buried in Jalalabad.

Esteemed Najibullah considers the death of Fakhr-e Afghan, the strong defender of Pashtun-Baluchi, the forces of peace and freedom of all the Afghan people, and the revolution of Afghanistan, to be a great loss. Najibullah added that Pacha Khan, in the region as well as in the Indian subcontinent, is an outstanding personality in anti-imperialist and anticolonialist struggles and on the path of prosperity for humanity because of his clear principles and national, progressive, and social struggles.

Esteemed Najibullah stated that with the death of Pacha Khan, our revolution and the construction of a new Afghan society and the policy of national reconciliation, which was closely linked to the policy of nonviolence of Pacha Khan, has lost a great guardian.

The Afghan president added that we desire that Pashtuns-Baluchi-Afghans and all people of the region will learn from the life of the Fakhr-e Afghan and his lighted path of patriotism and humanitarism toward the realization of the aims of peace and freedom.

PDPA Sends Condolences

LD210744 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0445 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Kabul, January 20, BAKHTAR—On the occasion of the decease of the great leader of Pashtuns, 'Abdul Ghafar Khan, the Central Committee of Awami National Party of Pakistan. [sentence as received] The message which is addressed to the Central Committee and 'Abdul Wali Khan, president of the Awami National Party, has expressed the deep condolence of the Central Committee and all members of the PDPA to the Pashtun people, members of Awami National Party and his survivors.

The Central Committee of the PDPA describes in the message the death of 'Abdul Ghafar Khan, the distinguished personality of the sub-continent of India, anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist campaigner, as a great loss.

National Mourning Declared

LD210750 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0500 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Kabul, January 20, BAKHTAR—A 35-member state mourning commission headed by Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan, has been assigned for the performance of funeral ceremony of the honour of Afghan, Khan 'Abdul Ghafar Khan, says an announcement released by the Office of Presidency of the Republic of Afghanistan.

The deputies of the commission are Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, prime minister of the republic, Saleh Muhammad Ziray, Politburo member and secretary of the PDPA CC, Sulayman La'eq, minister of nationalities and tribal affairs, and Mawlawi 'Abdul Jamil Zarifi, minister of Islamic affairs and trust properties.

The Republic of Afghanistan declared 4-day national mourning from January 20. The state flags of the Republic of Afghanistan inside the country and in diplomatic missions and embassies of Afghan abroad will be half-hoisted and official celebrations will not be held.

The burial ceremony of Ghafar Khan will be attended by the state authorities of the Republic of Afghanistan, the leaders of the PDPA, National Front, political and social organizations, social figures, relatives and friends of Ghafar Khan in foreign countries, political, social and tribal chiefs Pashtuns and Baluchis of Pashtunkhawa and Baluchestan, representatives of political and social organisations of the people of Pakistan and representatives of the vast masses of the people.

The diplomatic missions and Afghanistan consulate in Pakistan are instructed to issue without delay entry visas to Afghanistan to all state and non-state authorities of Pakistan, who want to come to Jalalabad for accompanying the funeral of Khan 'Abdul Ghafar Khan.

Honour of Afghan, Khan 'Abdul Ghafar Khan at his own will is going to be buried in his personal residence in Jalalabad city.

The exact date of his funeral ceremony will be announced later.

Najibullah Gives News Conference on Khowst

LD210735 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0418 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Kabul, January 20, BAKHTAR—The president of the country, Najibullah received the journalists of socialist and capitalist countries for a press conference

and answered their questions about the process of the implementation of the national reconciliation policy and lifting the economic blockade of Khowst grand district here today.

Najibullah Delivers Speech at Military Parade
LD182323 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Speech by Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan, at a military parade in Kabul on 18 January—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Dear compatriots and friends in arms, the Armed Forces of the country celebrate the great political-military results which have been won in the Gardeyz-Khowst area. In a short time, the siege of the important strategic highway was broken and foodstuffs, fuel, medicine, and other goods have been transported to Khowst district, which had previously been under siege.

The people recall what steps were taken by the state to solve this problem through peaceful means. State representatives traveled many times to Khowst and Gardeyz. They tried to find peaceful ways to solve it. The armed extremist groups were strongly warned that the road must eventually be opened. We also reminded the people of Zadran that the road was built by the state and therefore belongs to the state.

More than a year has passed since then but the enemies of reconciliation did not allow the noble people and the elders of the Zadran tribe, who seriously intended to peacefully open that road, to start negotiations with the state. What should be done in such a situation? As many as 45,000 of Khowst's residents were under siege. They were threatened by famine. We made efforts to send goods by air. But as you know, this method is not a viable way to transport all the necessary goods. Moreover, the militarists of Pakistan and the extremists started shooting down civilian aircraft with Stinger and Blowpipe missiles.

As a result of these acts tens of innocent people including old men, women, and children were martyred. We could not wait any longer and see the people of Khowst—men, women, and children—starve. Therefore, at the start of the winter we occupied all the dominant heights, including the Sataw Kandaw pass. Despite this, the state of Afghanistan, because of the proposal of the historic Grand Assembly, behaved with consideration and decided to delay war operations for a month. Thereby the last opportunity to solve this problem peacefully was granted. But once again the enemies of national reconciliation destroyed the possibility of reaching an agreement between the Zadran tribe and its elders and the state. And, using Pakistani military aid, they started to deploy extremist forces in the region.

Yesterday, through the mass media our compatriots saw that nine extremist chiefs, who had agreed to open the Gardeyz-khowst highway and to a peaceful settlement of the problem, were shot dead in Pakistan by other extremists. These acts by the armed extremists compelled us to launch military operations against them and to open the Gardeyz-Khowst highway.

As a result of the brave and resolute actions of our heroic forces, life in the major district of Khowst has returned to normal. So far 20,000 tons of assorted goods, including food, fuel, and clothes have been sent to Khowst and it still continues. We thank all those who carried out their meritorious part in the fulfillment of this task. The harsh situation that was dominant there has improved. Happiness and jubilation are seen on the streets of Khowst. The people of Khowst greet our soldiers and officers with dancing and flowers. They notice today how the price of 7 kilograms of salt fell from 2,000 afghanis to 130 afghanis and the price of 1 kilogram of sugar decreased from 300 afghanis to 30 afghanis, and the price of a barrel of oil has come down to 5,000 afghanis from 70,000 afghanis. Prices have fallen by 10 to 20 percent.

The Western mass media is trying not to show the importance of our political-military success in Sataw Kandaw against the armed extremist groups. False propaganda tries to show the results of military operations in Sataw Kandaw the other way around, as if the Afghan Army was not able to open this road. Our heroic Armed Forces, inspired by their heroic forefathers and despite the false propaganda of the enemy, were able to inflict crushing blows on the extremist groups and maintain the security of the Gardeyz-Khowst highway. The residents of Khowst saw the heroism of our army's struggle against the enemies of our country and of conciliation.

Our forces suffered very few casualties due to the use of tried and trusted war tactics and their numbers cannot be compared with the results. The people of Afghanistan hail the pure souls of their heroic martyrs. We respect the memories of those heroes who sacrificed their souls to preserve the lives of the others and we are proud of them. We remember Captain Hafizollah, political deputy of the hero assault Desant Brigade. He took part in operations in Bakwah, Paktika, Qandahar, Ghazni, Parvan, Kapisa, Panjsher, Herat, Mazar-e Sharif, Jalalabad, and Lowgar and demonstrated heroism and chivalry. The Gardeyz operation was his last. He heroically became a martyr. He was named Hero of the Republic of Afghanistan in appraisal of his heroism. His brilliant life and his death for the revolution is a model and an example for all of our armed forces.

We remember Comrade Baymorad, son of Qoli, soldier of No 2 Company of No 2 Reserve Unit of the Police, who bravely became a martyr. We bow with respect in his eternal memory.

Lieutenant Delawar is also standing here in Revolutionary Square, among the soldiers. He has taken part in 749 operations, has been injured twice, and has shown bravery and gallantry in the struggle against the extremists. He has been awarded the title of Hero of the Republic of Afghanistan. Thank you dear and brave comrade.

A number of other friends have also been awarded the title of Hero of the Republic of Afghanistan. We mention their names—names which have brought honor and pride to our people: Comrade Hamidollah, son of Abdollah, soldier of the 1st Company, Engineering Battalion, 7th Infantry Division; Comrade Baba Jan, son of Qurban, soldier of 973 Battalion of the 2d Hero Border Brigade; and Comrade Major Muhammad Masom, son of Aurang, employee of the State Security Department of Paktia Province. The country's medals and decorations will also be awarded to dozens of other people.

Dear compatriots, we should stress and say clearly that the victory in Gardeyz-Khowst region was achieved because the noble and brave people of Zadran did not stand alongside the extremists groups and did not give them any support. On the contrary, they demanded the opening of the road by peaceful means.

Nor did other tribes of Paktia Province such as the Mangal, the Jaji, the Ahmadzai, the Chamkani, the Tota Kheyl, and others support the activities of the extremists groups in the various tribal assemblies and in the Grand Assembly. They demanded the opening of the Gardeyz-Khowst road in order to free the inhabitants of their province, Khowst, from death and starvation.

This victory is the result of the intelligence and wisdom of Paktia's tribes and nationalities who did not allow the enemy to create discord among them. We express our sincere thanks and appreciation for the responsible stand taken by all the tribes and nationalities of Paktia and Paktika Provinces and of Khowst and particularly the noble tribes of Zadran.

We consider this to be a powerful sign of the unity and solidarity of the tribes and nationalities and of our people with our Armed Forces. We will respond with goodness toward this good action by the Zadran tribes and by ordering the Armed Forces to return to their permanent deployment places.

We invite those Zadran families who were under pressure by the extremists because of the opening of the road by peaceful means and who were forced to leave their families and their homes, to return to their homes free from the influence of extremist propaganda. They should send their representatives to us so that we can send all the necessary assistance at the earliest possible time. And we will hold further assemblies with those who were under extremist pressure in a climate of fraternity and sincerity.

Dear compatriots, soldiers, and officers of the Armed Forces: Our forces have completed the tasks in Khowst put before them by the state. We have a strong belief that the brave tribes of Zadran and all the tribes and nationalities in Paktia, will also play their active role in keeping the Gardeyz-Khowst highway open, which is in their interest, and will provide security for the highway and the delivery of goods.

We warn the extremists that if they exert armed pressure either on the Zadran tirbes or on the tribes in Khowst and or on other tribes in Paktia and Paktika or on the Armed Forces, they will again receive a crushing blow.

On the occasion of the fulfillment of this humanitarian duty, we express our deep and sincere thanks to the generals, the officers, the NCO's, and the soldiers of our heroic Armed Forces for their gallantry and heroism.

Dear comrades, I wish you further victories in improving your combat ability, serving the homeland, the people, and the revolution. We hope that new victories for the cause of national reconciliation will be waiting for you.

I sincerely request all the personnel of the heroic armed forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, and those who are present in this square, to observe a minute of silence, for those who have lost their lives in order to implement the humanitarian duty of serving humanity.

Wakil on Soviet Withdrawal, Coalition Government

LD171141 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0445 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] Kabul, January 16, BAKHTAR—Matters discussed during the meetings [words indistinct] with E. Shevardnadze, minister of foreign affairs of the Soviet Union, were about the solution of the situation around Afghanistan, the process of the implementation of national reconciliation policy and the expansion of bilateral relations in economic, scientific, technical and cultural fields.

The question of the return of the Soviet limited military contingents from Afghanistan was also talked over and both sides reached to this conclusion that favourable conditions can be secured as soon as possible and with coming into force of parallel agreements during the talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan through the special envoy of the UN secretary general which is possible to be a final in the periodical round of talks in February as well as with cessation of foreign aids to armed groups in Afghanistan, it can be started within 60 days after the signing of agreement on the return of Soviet limited military contingents.

As was declared by the President Najibullah, the return of these contingents will be completed not longer than 12 months.

Replying to a question connected with situation after the return of Soviet troops, the minister said that the state of the Republic of Afghanistan is so implementing the peace process with seriousness from the external aspect in the Geneva talks and from external aspect it is to realise the national reconciliation which is aimed at halting war and bloodshed. The process of peace means to heal wounds and putting an end to bloodshed not to cause flow of blood streams. Afghan patriots defend the gains of revolution while the enemies of people's prosperity are dreaming how to fan up the war in response to our sincerity for ending the war.

Answering to a question pertaining to Cordovez' due visit to the region and the next round of talks the minister of foreign affairs said that Mr. Cordovez will pay a visit from January 18-28, 1988 to the region and the next round of talks is expected in February. We are confident that, though some problems which require goodwill approach from the other side are not yet solved but, all conditions are favourable for the talks to be a final one. The documents which are to be signed are almost finalised.

The matter that the US side agreed to be one of the guarantors is worth welcoming to us. Afghanistan attaches great importance to the outcomes of these talks and is hopeful that the reasonable and realistic approach of other side will make possible to reach in to significant results.

Asked about the truthfulness of PRAVDA's announcement of the first of May, as the starting day for the return of Soviet troops, the minister said based on understanding already reached between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, the return of the Soviet contingents starts two months after the signing of the four documents between Afghanistan and Pakistan in Geneva. We have declared time and again that cessation of foreign armed interferences into the internal affairs of Afghanistan is the basic question which is the main reason for inviting the limited military contingents of the Soviet Union here. Thus, when this threat is removed, naturally the cause and effects will also be eliminated and necessity would not be felt for it here.

Replying to question whether the first of May has been determined in talks with E. Shevardnadze, the minister replied that the commencement of the return of Soviet troops is only a component of overall settlement of the situation around Afghanistan which has direct connection with the stoppage of US and other countries' military aids to the opposition extremists. When these interferences are ceased and their non-resumption guaranteed, if the condition become more favourable, the return of Soviet troops will take place sooner.

Replying to a question on the position of PDPA in the coalition government 'Abdul Wakil said the PDPA is the initiator of national reconciliation policy, the organism of national unity to the extent of a coalition government. "We do not believe to give priority to ideological considerations for forming a coalition government. The coalition will be based on vast vistas which includes all political and social forces of the country, the aims of which is removal of differences and ending of bloodshed.

The foreign minister replying to a question on economic arrangements and new characteristics of Afghan Soviet relations said that vast prospectives are to emerge in the expansion of economic, technical and scientific cooperation with the implementation of national reconciliation which naturally give new characteristics to these relations. The aims of expanding relations is restructuring of the national economy and rehabilitation of productive [word indistinct] particularly industry which has been severely effected [as received] from the undeclared war.

The new characteristic in our relations with the Soviet Union is that it is not merely based on a state-to-state basis but it also [word indistinct] the establishment of the relations of private sector with the institutions of the Soviet Union and the extension of credit with easy terms for strengthening the private sector.

Likewise, the program of direct economic, social and cultural cooperation between the cities of Afghanistan with the republics of the Soviet Union is possessing a new quality in our general and all-sided ties. Thus, the special possibility of every republic of the Soviet Union is being studied in coping with the specific requirements of each province or city.

The relations of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union are enjoying traditional principles and have continued in the lapse of history on the basis of good-neighbourliness and mutual respect during the monarchy, Da'ud rule and after the revolution.

There is no areas in the socio-economic aspects during these periods in which the signs of cooperation with the Soviet Union could not be observed. Of course, the new stage of conciliation has its special requirements for the evolution of these relations which can be envisaged as part of the new characteristics of the new level in our relations.

Being asked by the American reporter about the role of Zahir Shah in the future coalition, minister of foreign affairs replied that the formation of a government of national unity to the extent of coalition leaves the door open to all. Every Afghan including Zahir Shah can have its share in proportion to the role in securing peace in the specific socio-politico position.

Replying to another question about an utopian plan by Ziaul Haq, president of Pakistan, on the division of future power in Afghanistan, minister of foreign affairs viewed that foreign countries do not have the right to devide power in our country and there should be no doubt that realisation of national reconciliation and formation of a government of national unity are the

duties of Afghans alone. When we resisted foreign intervention during the war time we will not allow during the peace process that the ideas of others slow down the peace process.

We are not only anxious to strengthen our relations with the socialist countries but ardently want to have close relations with the neighbouring countries, the Islamic and Arab countries and the capitalist countries as well.

We hope such grounds be provided that those who had been involved in the destruction of Afghanistan in the undeclared war to take part in the construction of Afghanistan under the condition of peace, said minister of foreign affairs.

BAKHTAR Commentary Views Coming UN Talks
LD210733 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0436 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Kabul, January 20, BAKHTAR—A political observer of BAKHTAR writes:

The visit of Diego Cordovez, special representative of the secretary general of the UN to the region, this January, has created this hope that endeavours for the speedy solution of the situation around Afghanistan has reached to its definite historic stage and the next round of talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan will be pursued with such an optimism that it should be a final one and terminate to the cessation of foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

'Abdul Wakil, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan in his interview with a reporter of THE WASHINGTON POST, has said that possibilities for necessary accords for the finalisation of the next round of talks are eminent. But first of all it is necessary that foreign interventions in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan be stopped.

Replying a question put before him by the reporter on the return of the Soviet limited military contingents, the minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan said that the question of the return of the limited military contingents of the Soviet Union to their country is only a part of the over all solution of the situation around Afghanistan which has direct connection with the cessation of American and other countries military aids to the Afghan extremist groups.

When interventions in the internal affairs of Afghanistan are stopped and its non-resumption is guaranteed and when the situation becomes ever more favourable the return of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan will be started before the time already fixed.

The reality lies here that since long before the Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, following the new way of political thinking have expressed their readiness with necessary flexibility and continue their true and serious attempts to this end.

The Republic of Afghanistan considers the grip of the special representative of the secretary general of the UN to the region which is aimed among others to provide necessary conditions for the convening of the next round of the Geneva talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan as an important and hopeful move for the solution of the situation around Afghanistan.

There are evidences that the conditions for the solution of the situation around Afghanistan in the wake of the policy of national reconciliation is more favourable than ever before.

The Republic of Afghanistan has provided to the opposition the facilities for the formation of a coalition government and has proposed to it twenty eight high state positions. The law of political parties was enforced. The Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan was approved.

Diplomatic activities were conducted through goodwill delegations of the Republic of Afghanistan to do away with misunderstandings in international atmosphere. Necessary provisions have been made for the return of refugees from abroad to their homeland. Tens of other measures have also been taken for getting access to the speedy solution of the situation around Afghanistan. All these arrangements were made to expedite the process of the practical solution of the situation in the region.

The leaders of Pakistan in their latest pronouncements have confirmed that the Soviet Union really intends to call its military forces from Afghanistan and this emanates from the goodwill of that country. The fact is that the Soviet Union has repeatedly declared that if intervention into the internal affairs of Afghanistan and assistance to anti-state extremists is ceased there is no need for the presence of their forces. The Soviet Union is in favour of a free, independent, non-aligned and a friendly Afghanistan with its neighbours.

The people and revolutionary state of the Republic of Afghanistan believes that in the light of the policy of national reconcilliation and by using wisdom and understandings the problems will be solved.

Indeed, the interests of all political forces, the peoples, and various sections of the Afghan society can be served through peace. This is the path of national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

USSR Academy of Sciences President Visits

Najibullah Receives Marchuk

LD191939 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, at 1700 today in his office met with Guriy Ivanovich Marchuk, president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and his accompanying delegation.

The expansion of scientific and technical cooperation between the Republic of Afghanistan and the USSR was discussed during the visit.

During the visit, 'Abdulhamid Mohtat, deputy prime minister, and Sulayman La'eq, president of the Afghan Academy of Sciences, and Pavel Petrovich Mozhayev, USSR ambassador and extraordinary representative to the Republic of Afghanistan, were present.

Science Academies Pact Signed

LD192302 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Excerpt] Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, prime minister of Afghanistan, took part this afternoon in a ceremony for the signing of a cooperation protocol and agreement between the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Afghanistan and the USSR Academy of Sciences. The ceremony took place in the headquarters of the Council of Ministers. The protocol was signed for the Afghan side by Sulayman La'eq, minister of nationalities and tribal affairs and president of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Afghanistan, and for the USSR side by USSR Academy of Sciences President Guriy Ivanovich Marchuk. [passage omitted]

Keshtmand Meets With Marchuk

LD200647 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0418 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Kabul, January 19, BAKHTAR—Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan met with Guriy Marchuk, president of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR here on Monday.

In the course of meeting, views were exchanged on expansion of mutual cooperation between the academies of sciences of the two countries.

Similarly, Guriy Marchuk met with the Sulayman La'eq, president of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Afghanistan. Both sides discussed matters concerning the development of cooperation between the academies of sciences of the two countries.

President of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR Guriy Marchuk heading a delegation of that academy arrived here on Monday.

Soviets Grant Aid for 'Essential Goods'

LD200055 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] The friendly Soviet Union has granted aid worth R150 million in the form of commodities such as foodstuffs, clothing, and other essential goods needed by our people. The aid has been granted to the Republic of Afghanistan in order to implement the national reconciliation policy.

A spokesman for the permanent Afghan-Soviet economic cooperation commission told BIA that Soviet aid to our people in various fields is broader than it ever has been. Each day designated delegations distribute nationwide sufficient Soviet aid to the needy and those families affected by the war.

The spokesman added that since the April Revolution, the USSR has given aid to the Republic of Afghanistan worth $1.1 billion, including project credits for consumer goods and grants.

Najibullah Presents Medals to Tribal Commanders

LD162101 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] This afternoon at the presidential headquarters at Kelkosha Palace, Afghan President Najibullah received the commanders of clan and tribal units.

At this meeting, esteemed Najibullah said: Our meeting today takes place 1 year after we proclaimed the policy of national reconciliation. It is clear to you and to all the people of our country that the final objective of this policy is to end the war and fratricide and achieve peace and tranquility.

Esteemed Najibullah added that the civil armed forces, including tribal and regional units, have accomplished major and valuable work in normalizing the situation in the country, restoring security, and in implementing the policy of national reconciliation.

At the end of this meeting, esteemed Najibullah presented medals and badges which had been approved by the Presidential Office, to a number of commanders of tribal and regional units in recognition of their worthy accomplishments.

Kabul National Reconciliation Commission Meets

LD200253 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] A Kabul city national reconciliation meeting was held today in the library of the Public Health Institute to assess the successes of national reconciliatin over the past year.

'Abdul Zohur Razmjo, member of the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee and secretary of the Kabul city party committee; members of the Kabul city national reconciliation commission; and members of Kabul's District No [number indistinct]; and the elders and social personalities of Kabul took part in the meeting.

After the recitation of verses from the Koran, the glorious, Khalil Ahmad 'Abawi, president of National Reconciliation Commission, read the annual report which says that in the city of Kabul 417 national reconciliation commissions have been set up, with a membership of 4,242 social personalities, elders, and members of social organizations, including 343 former opponents who have joined national reconciliation. During this period, 735 families, consisting of 4,077 people, and 1,176 individuals have returned to Kabul from Pakistan and Iran.

BAKHTAR reports that the participants in the meeting debated the main report. The national reconciliation policy was considered of importance for the cessation of bloodshed and for peace and security. It was asserted that more work was needed in this respect. The meeting ended with the passing of a resolution to accelerate the implementation of the national reconciliation policy.

'Extremists' Fire Missiles at Homes in Konar
LD191806 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] The BIA military correspondent reports that elements linked to the extremist groups recently fired surface-to-surface missiles at our compatriots' houses in the villages of Dam, (Qarghah), and Pashshad in Konar Province, injuring 5 persons, including women and children, and destroying 15 houses and 5 shops.

As a result of this barbaric attack by extremists the grand mosque of Dam Qal'eh village was also damaged.

According to another report from Herat Province, the criminal extremists fired mortar shells at Nur Hospital yesterday morning and martyred two of our innocent compatriots and injured another person.

Armed Group 'Crushed' in Vardak Province
LD161751 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] An armed extremist group, led by Hazratoddin, nicknamed [name indistinct], and Amanollah, who intended to disrupt the peaceful life of the people in the region of Vardak province, were recently crushed with the cooperation of the people.

According to a BIA report, the peaceful people of Vardak reported to the national reconciliation commission of this province the existence of an armed extremist group and they asked the security forces to prevent the perpetration of their crimes.

In view of the demands made by the national reconciliation commission and by the people of this province, the security forces took action and asked them to hand over their weapons. However the extremist group did not agree and attacked the security forces. The security forces retaliated. As a result, this group together with their ringleaders were crushed and a large quantity of weapons and ammunition were seized by the security forces.

Mujahidin Say Soviets Must Talk With Resistance
PM201029 Stockholm SVENSKA DAGBLADET in Swedish 12 Jan 88 p 4

[TIDNINGARNAS TELEGRAMBYRA report: "Afghan Guerrilla Leader: We Want Talks"]

[Text] Soviet signals of a military withdrawal from Afghanistan are not giving rise to any optimism within the resistance movement.

"We cannot put our faith in words that are not followed by action," resistance leader Muhammad Eshaq told TIDNINGARNAS TELEGRAMBYRA. Eshaq is in Stockholm because of Soviet Prime Minister Nikolay Ryzhkov's visit.

"The Soviet Union talks of peace. I am here to remind people that they are continuing their war against the Afghan people," Eshaq said. He is a political official and "foreign minister" of one of the largest resistance movements, Jamiyat-e Eslami.

He was unwilling to criticize Sweden for inviting Ryzhkov and was grateful for the Swedish condemnations of the occupation and for its political support.

"But you should not become too optimistic because of the propaganda. You must look at the facts."

He stressed that the resistance movement is keen to seek a political solution. Therefore its foremost demand is that the Soviet Union should begin direct negotiations with the guerrillas.

"We are their enemies on the battlefield. They must negotiate with us if they want to reach a solution.

"A Soviet withdrawal must be linked to self-determination for the Afghan people. The puppet government in Kabul cannot resist the mujahidin, and if it falls there is the threat of a new invasion from the Soviet Union," Eshaq said.

He promised at the same time that the guerrillas are prepared to observe a cease-fire to facilitate a rapid Soviet withdrawal if this is linked with self-determination. Eshaq also said that the resistance movement is prepared to accept an international commission to oversee the transition to democratic rule.

However, he ruled out all forms of a coalition government with those currently in power.

Hikmatyar Says Moscow Ready for Direct Talks
BK201710 Hong Kong AFP in English 1659 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 20 (AFP)—An influential Afghan guerrilla leader said here Wednesday that the Soviet Union had contacted the resistance through private channels and now appeared ready for direct talks with the rebel mujahidin.

"The Russians have tried to convey their messages through many channels," Gulbuddin Hikmatyar said.

The Soviet Union was willing to and had shown an interest in talking to the mujahidin leaders, he added.

Mr Hikmatyar, whose Hezb-e Eslami party is considered the largest guerrilla group in Afghanistan, told a news conference that the Soviet Union had used private sources for such messages, but that "we cannot disclose their sources at this stage."

He said the Soviet ambassador to Islamabad held two meetings with the chief of Pakistan's fundamentalist Jamiyat-e Eslami party, Qazi Hoseyn Ahmed, last month which were also connected with these Soviet approaches.

However, Mr Hikmatyar, explaining the Afghan resistance leaders' refusal Tuesday to talk to UN intermediary Diego Cordovez, said the mujahidin would never agree to sign any agreement with the current Soviet "puppet regime" in Kabul.

The mujahidin would never share power with the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), which Mr Hikmatyar said had destroyed Afghanistan and was responsible for what happened in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion in 1979.

He said the mujahidin would not participate in Mr Cordovez's mission as they felt he had accommodated only the Soviet point of view.

The UN envoy was expected here late Wednesday to prepare for a final round of indirect talks in Geneva which he described as vital for finalising agreement on a Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Mr Cordovez should "close the Geneva chapter and arrange negotiations between the two main parties—Moscow and mujahidin," Mr Hikmatyar said.

The refusal to meet with Mr Cordovez indicated that Pakistan's efforts to convince hardliners in the 7-party mujahidin alliance to agree to a compromise with the PDPA had been unsuccessful, analysts said.

Mr Hikmatyar said Islamabad should not be unhappy as it had been backing the demand for an unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops and there was an understanding between the rebels and Pakistan on this issue.

He said he was confident that Pakistan would not sign any agreement in Geneva without consulting the mujahidin.

The mujahidin would continue to fight until the last Soviet soldier withdrew, Mr Hikmatyar said. They would not tolerate a single Soviet soldier's presence on an inch of Afghan soil, he added.

The guerrilla leader said Moscow's attitude had changed after it failed in repeated attempts to set up an Afghan army, strengthen the PDPA and win over at least the peasants and workers.

With all their efforts "they could not control even 10 percent of Afghanistan," he added.

He said a senior Soviet official in 1986 admitted that 26,000 Soviet soldiers had died in Afghanistan and 65,000 had been wounded in eight years of war. "The casualty figure must have exceeded 120,000 killed and wounded," he added.

Replying to a question, he denied his party was responsible for internecine fighting and added that the rebel parties were now "well united." There is "better military and political cooperation and the mujahidin's morale is high enough to continue a prolonged war," he said.

Islamic Coalition on Proposed Soviet Withdrawal
LD191850 Tehran IRNA in English 1801 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] Kerman, Jan. 19, IRNA—Afghan Muslims have inflicted fatal blows on the Marxist army of the Kabul regime wresting control of large parts of their homeland, said a member of Afghanistan Islamic Coalition Council (ICC), Sayyed Hoseyn 'Alemi, here Tuesday.

'Alemi describing the present situation in Afghanistan as "hopeful" said the armed struggle of Afghan mujahidin against the aggressive Soviet forces will not stop unless the Islamic ideals of Afghan Muslims are realized.

He noted that at least one million Afghans have been martyred by the aggressors and another five million made homeless and deported to other countries.

'Alemi said that his trip to Iran is aimed at reflecting the depth of the occupiers' crimes, explaining the just demands of the Afghan mujahidin, mobilizing Afghan refugees and inspecting their conditions in Iran.

Despite the shortage of weapons, he said, the mujahidin are in a favorable position and the Soviet Army is on the verge of complete defeat. Moscow is desperately searching ways for an "honorable" pull-out from Afghanistan, he pointed.

The relentless attacks of the Afghan mujahidin have pushed the Soviet troops on the defensive, he added.

On coordination between combatant groups he said, the ICC composed of 8 Shi'ite groups has effectively conducted warfare and in addition through coordinated actions with certain "Sunni brothers" have kept up their common struggle against the regime ruling Kabul.

The Soviets have committed heinous crimes in Afghanistan in over eight years of their occupation, including the deploying of napalm bombs, 508 types of poisonous gases which numbs the victims and the use of SS12 missiles, which are banned by international laws, he said.

The ICC member quoted an intelligence officer of the joint forces who defected to the mujahidin as saying, over 100,000 Afghan muslims among them children, old men and women have so far been summarily executed without any trial, by the regime.

Majority of Soviet people want Soviet forces to leave Afghanistan, disclosed 'Alemi citing, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's reported saying to the so-called Afghan president Muhammad Najibullah that he no longer can offer excuses to the Soviet people for the continued presence of his forces which has created problems in the U.S.S.R.

On military aid to Afghan mujahidin from the Western bloc, 'Alemi said global arrogance does not stand a chance to dominate Afghanistan after the Muslim country is free from the Soviet grip.

'Alemi charged the U.S. for plotting in the region adding the Afghan people are aware of all its conspiracies and chant "death to the U.S." parallel with the slogan "death to U.S.S.R."

He said that it is clear the U.S. and the Soviet Union reached the conclusion that the Islamic revolution with its characteristics of negating both eastern and western influence should not emerge victorious in Afghanistan and a government loyal to both the U.S. and the Soviet Union should take control.

He repeated that the mujahidin will not cease fighting the Kabul regime as long as an Islamic government based on rejection of both the East and West has not been established.

On Soviet offers to pull-out troops provided the Americans reduce their assistance to mujahidin, he said that it is an old-fashioned policy of the Soviet Union to stall their pull-out and justify their nine-year-old aggression. These moves are nothing but lies, he said.

"We believe the Soviets will never leave Afghanistan through negotiations but the only way to kick them out of the country is the escalation of the armed Jihad and strengthening of war fronts".

At the end of the interview he called on Afghan refugees in Iran not to forget the front lines because their brethren in Afghanistan are fighting the enemy single-handedly and are in need of the refugees' help.

Superpower Policies Viewed

LD210942 Tehran IRNA in English 0857 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 21, IRNA—The Islamic Coalition Council of Afghanistan in a statement issued here Wednesday reiterated it will continue struggle until downfall of the Soviet-backed regime of Afghanistan and formation of an Islamic Government. The statement was released following the recent negotiations of the superpower leaders on Afghanistan issue.

For the past nine years that Afghanistan has been under military occupation of the Soviet Red Army, the heroic resistance put up by the Afghan Muslim mujahidin has put some 150,000 occupying forces, armed to teeth, in despair and has shattered the myth over the Soviet power, the statement added.

Presently the occupiers are promising withdrawal of their forces and discussing formation of a coalition government, it added.

On recent negotiations of the superpower heads on Afghanistan issue and statements of the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in Kabul and U.S. deputy secretary of state in Pakistan, the statement said that fate of the Afghans will only be decided by the Afghans and the nine years struggle of the Afghan mujahidin is a proof of this fact.

The Afghans, it stressed, will not allow any other power or government to decide their future and will continue their armed struggle until establishment of sovereignty of Islam in Afghanistan.

Withdrawal of the occupying Soviet forces will not settle the case, adding that massive destruction caused in Afghanistan, plunder of its material wealth and massacre of innocent Afghans could not be ignored.

The statement warned the U.S. and its allies that no deal could be made over Afghanistan and that it should refrain from shedding crocodile tears for the Afghans.

Major Mujahidin Attack on Soviet Base in Konar

BK201614 Hong Kong AFP in English 1600 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 20 (AFP)—Afghan guerrillas have attacked and destroyed a large part of a Soviet-Afghan military base in northeastern Afghanistan, rebel sources said Wednesday.

"We launched a surprise attack on this garrison town in response to the attack against the mujahidin at Khowst," Walid Majruh, commander of the National Islamic Front, told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE.

The attack took place Sunday night at (Charasaray), capital of Konar Province, held by some 1,500 Soviet soldiers and 1,800 Afghans, he said.

"Seventy percent of the base was destroyed, including dozens of tanks, heavy artillery and cannon. The airport and a hydroelectric plant were paralysed and we blew up munitions and fuel dumps," he said over the telephone from the northwest Pakistan border city of Peshawar.

(Charasaray) is the base for hundreds of crack Soviet Spetsnaz commandos, observers here said.

"We do not know what the exact losses are but the Soviets sent eight helicopters after our withdrawal to evacuate the dead and wounded... The Mig's bombarded us Monday, but from too great a height," Mr Majruh added.

A source close to the president of the mujahidin alliance, Yunis Khalis, said Soviet-Afghan losses (wounded and killed) had risen to several hundreds.

The rebel operation—the largest in the region for several years—mobilised some 600 mujahidin from the National Islamic Front and 400 Hezb-e Eslami members led by General Rahim Wardak and Commander Muhammad Hajaddin, Mr Majruh said.

Soviet-Afghan forces lifted the rebel siege of Khowst in eastern Paktia Province on January 1 after several weeks of heavy fighting.

Mujahidin Combat Operations in Herat, Qandahar

LD210938 Tehran IRNA in English 0930 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 21, IRNA—Afghan Muslim revolutionaries killed and wounded 67 joint Soviet-Afghan Government forces and captured 25 others in two separate operations along Herat-Eslam Qal'eh Highway, in Ghurian Governorate of Herat Province, last week. The mujahidin also demolished 15 personnel carriers.

15 joint forces were killed or wounded during the missile attack of Muslim revolutionaries on a military center along Kabul-Qandahar highway on Jan. 9.

Meanwhile, a security post of the joint forces located in an area between Kabul and Pakhman, was taken over by Afghan mujahidin and 14 joint forces were killed on Jan. 7.

Bangladesh

Further Reportage on 2-Day Opposition Strike

Dhaka Police Raid Injuries

BK201619 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] In Bangladesh, normal life remained disrupted in Dhaka and other parts of the country for 12 hours on the 1st day of the 2-day strike called by 21 political parties which began this morning. The strike was the latest in the series of protests called by opposition parties pressing for General Ershad's resignation. Sporadic incidents of violence, arson, bomb blasts, and clashes between the police and party workers have been reported. At least 50 people were injured and 30 others arrested in a police raid in Dhaka.

98 People Arrested

BK210240 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] The day-long opposition program in Dhaka and other places yesterday was marked by stray incidents of bomb blasts [words indistinct]. BSS reports that the police arrested 98 people in different parts of the capital for attempting to violate rules. One government vehicle was damaged by some people near (Shahbagh). A good number of rickshaws and auto rickshaws, DRTC [Dhaka Road Transport Corporation] buses, and some minibuses were found plying throughout the day. Most of the shops and commercial establishments were closed. But the central secretariat and other government offices were open with a good number of attendance.

A press release of the Jatiya Sramik Party says that mill factories functioned normally. Railway public relations department says the train movement in the eastern zone was almost normal despite a few obstructions by groups of people in some places. The railway line between Sarkarhat and Tajirhat was uprooted by some people in the morning, but the communication was later restored. A group of people also tried to obstruct train movement by launching an attack on a passenger train near Mymensingh Agricultural University. In the western zone, train movement was partially disrupted in Khulna, Rajbari, and Rajshahi due to obstructions created by mobs. In Rajbari, a mob forcibly entered the station and [words indistinct] the stationmaster and some of his staff. In Khulna, a group of people entered the railway station and threatened the officials not to operate trains. Launch services from Narayanganj to other parts of the country were also disrupted.

Strike Enters Second Day

BK210524 Hong Kong AFP in English 0503 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Excerpt] Dhaka, Jan 21 (AFP)—A series of blasts shook Dhaka early Thursday [21 January] on the second day of a nationwide general strike called by the opposition to force the resignation of President Hussain Mohammad Ershad.

Residents of Dhaka's Azimpur and Shahjahanpur areas said they were woken up early Thursday by a series of explosions, apparently caused by powerful firecrackers.

There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties from the blasts, which police believe were caused by opposition activists.

The strike was called by Bangladesh's three major opposition alliances and parties to force Mr. Ershad to step down and to oppose his call for parliamentary elections next month.

Eyewitnesses said the strike, to continue until dusk, was being widely respected in the capital Thursday with shops, markets and businesses shut.

Most vehicles were off the streets but there were more cycle-rickshaws, a popular mode of transportation in Bangladesh, operating than Wednesday, they said.

Offices and banks in the Motijheel commercial district of the capital began opening but attendance and business were poor, they added.

In Chittagong, the strike call was also being well-observed Thursday, an AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE correspondent in the southern port city said.

Buses, trucks and other public and private vehicles were off the roads while some rickshaws were on the streets, the correspondent said.

Newspapers here reported meanwhile that at least three polling offices across the country had been attacked during the past two days.

The Bengali daily ITTEFAQ said that a bomb exploded Wednesday outside the office of an elections officer in the capital. No one was hurt in the blast.

In western Pabna town, a group of youths stormed into the local election office late Tuesday and set fire to a voters list and other documents.

In the eastern district town of Brahmanbaria, 15 youths forced their way into the local election office Wednesday and also set documents on fire, ITTEFAQ reported. [passage omitted]

Iran

Cabinet Discusses Majlis Term, Taxes

LD201200 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] At its meeting today, the cabinet reviewed current problems in the country and in the region. Its members then reviewed and discussed the latest developments in the Islamic and anti-Zionist uprising among the inhabitants of occupied Palestine.

At this point, Interior Minister Mohtashami briefed the ministers on the measures taken by the Interior Ministry regarding the planning and organization of the third term of the Islamic Consultative Assembly. He explained: Despite some problems and a lack of coordination, the creation of a very strong inspectorate within the Interior Ministry gives us cause for hope that these elections will be conducted in a fair and truly healthy atmosphere.

As the session continued, the participants discussed the draft value-added tax bill proposed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance. The draft was examined and approved. During the meeting, changes to the country's tax structure, the provision of a just system of taxation, the collection of information on incomes earned in the service, production, and distribution sectors, the completion of a direct taxation system, the prevention of inflation resulting from budget deficiencies or forecasts, and the creation of discretionary tax exemptions for necessary sectors and vital fields of policy-making were all seen as special features of the bill.

Majlis Candidates Asked To Resign From Jobs

LD211012 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] The secretary of the central committee supervising the Majlis elections has made a statement asking all candidates for the third Majlis term who are employed in the departments and professions mentioned in Article 31 of the election law and its notes to submit their resignations, signed by the heads of their departments, to the secretariat of the central committee supervising the elections before 4 February.

Supreme Judicial Council Amends Penal Code

LD201817 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] According to a Central News Unit report, 25 articles of a general penal code for corporal punishment were approved with some amendments at today's session of the Supreme Judicial Council. Article 55 of the code states: Should any person who has been assigned a duty in the election process tamper with ballot papers or votes, increase or decrease the number of ballot papers or votes, or change a name on a ballot paper, he will be imprisoned from 3 months to a year, and will be barred

from being a candidate in one round of elections. Any other individual who commits these offenses will be imprisoned from 1 to 6 months.

Reaction to Murder of Iraqi Cleric Continues

Khamene'i Sends Message

LD202204 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 20 Jan 88

[Text] The president, Mr Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, has sent a message to Hojjat-ol Eslam Seyyed Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq. In his cable, the president offered his condolences and congratulations on the martyrdom of Hojjat-ol Eslam Seyyed Mahdi al-Hakim at the hands of mercenary agents in the service of the Ba'thist-Zionist regime ruling Iraq. He also offered his condolences and congratulations to the other survivors of the martyr.

Similar messages were sent to the chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq by the Tehran Society of Militant Clerics and by the Office of Irregular Warfare at Khatem ol-Anbiya' Headquarters.

Sudanese Students Protest

LD210701 Tehran IRNA in English 0657 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 21, IRNA—A large group of Sudanese students in a massive rally in Khartoum University campus Wednesday condemned the assassination of prominent Iraqi opposition leader Hojjat ol-Eslam Mahdi al-Hakim in Khartoum Sunday, reported the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) here Thursday.

The students sympathizers of the Islamic revolution called on the Khartoum government to arrest and punish the culprits.

Martyr Hojjat ol-Eslam Mahdi al-Hakim, brother of the SAIRI's head was gunned down by Iraqi secret agents at the crowded lobby of Khartoum's Hilton Hotel Sunday.

A number of Iraqi Government agents attempted to disrupt the rally but the plot was foiled due to the vigilance and timely reaction of Sudanese Muslim students.

Oil Official Reviews Turkish Pipeline Project

LD172044 Tehran IRNA in English 1634 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 17, IRNA—The proposed Iran-Turkey oil trunkline is a long-run project chiefly aimed at making Iran's oil prices competable [as received] with other oil suppliers at the Turkish Mediterranean port of Iskenderun, said Deputy Oil Minister and Director General for Southern Oil Fields Mohammad Javad Asemipur here today.

Asemipur, speaking in an interview upon his arrival from Turkey after talks on the pipeline, told IRNA that cost estimate for the giant project, which has been prepared without the services of consulting engineer, is some four billion dollars.

He said the agreement for the project was signed between the Iranian and Turkish prime ministers in Tehran over two years ago, adding that the two sides then agreed to study technical and economic aspects of the plan.

"The two prime ministers also reached understanding for the construction of a separate gas pipeline in order to supply Turkey's gas needs as well as exports to Europe," Asemipur pointed.

During the visit, he said, Iranian and Turkish officials discussed the remaining points of the plan including the financial resources and selection of a consulting engineer for preparation of the detailed plan. A Turkish delegation is to visit Iran next month to prepare the final report on the plan which would then be submitted to the prime ministers of the two countries for approval.

On choosing of the venue in Turkey, Asemipur said the major aim to pump Iran's oil to Iskenderun is to compete with other oils available at the port. That's why this port was selected as the shortest, safest and the most appropriate course in view of the necessary pressure for the oil flow and the least number of pumping stations requried, he said.

On foreign propaganda that Iran is serious about the project due to hardships for its oil exports, Asemipur said if Iraqi military attacks on ships and oil terminals reported in Baghdad's military communiques are compared to the real oil exports by Iran telexed daily by international media, it can be concluded that the Islamic Republic is capable of exporting its OPEC quota without using any foreign terminals or already constructed pipelines.

"Iran considers the plan as a long-run project and not a short one in the wartime," he stressed.

Outlines Timetable

LD190317 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Text] After returning from a trip to Turkey, the deputy oil minister and manager of the country's oil-producing regions announced: Talks have been held with Turkish officials on the construction of an oil pipeline between our two countries. We also studied the possibility of building a gas pipeline to Turkey. This would allow us to supply gas to Turkey and to export the surplus to Europe.

We agreed that within a month, in conjunction with the planned visit to Iran by a Turkish delegation, a final report should be prepared for submission to the Turkish and Iranian prime ministers. The document will be discussed later when the Turkish prime minister travels to Iran.

The deputy oil minister added: The plans for Iranian-Turkish oil pipelines were drafted without the help of foreign advisers. This project, which has an estimated cost of around $4 billion, is designed to make Iran's oil at the port of Iskenderun cheap enough to compete with oil supplied by other producers there. He noted: Iran's achievements in oil exports thus far prove that the Islamic Republic of Iran has been able to export its OPEC quota without having any terminals outside the country or pipelines crossing other nations. For the time being, the implementation of the Iran-Turkey oil pipeline project will not play a role in increasing Iran's oil exports. [as heard]

He stressed that the Islamic Republic does not see this program as a short-term project for the duration of the war alone. Rather, it considers it to be long-term, as shown by the huge capital investment.

Oil Minister on Public Gas Rationing Offenses

LD190333 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Text] We now present a report on an interview with the oil minister concerning the implementation of regulations dealing with corporal punishment for offenses connected with the sale and distribution of petroleum products.

In the interview, the oil minister, Mr Aqazadeh, said: The regulations governing the use of corporal punishment for crimes in the distribution of petroleum products went into effect at the start of Mehr this year [23 September 1987]. Working within those rules, 1,241 cases have been uncovered and investigated in different parts of the country thus far, and verdicts have been issued. The offenders have had to pay a total of 165 million rials in fines. He added: Some 691 cases involved private gas stations, 95 others involved government-run stations, 79 cases dealt with kerosene distributors, and 61 others covered tank trucks. Another 316 cases were for other types of crimes.

At this point, the oil minister expressed his thanks for the cooperation and coordination among the judiciary, Intelligence Ministry, police, Criminal Investigations Department, revolution committees, and the inspectors in the Oil Ministry responsible for the distribution of petroleum products. It was this collective effort that enabled them to uncover some instances of illicit activities within the oil company. The minister noted: Thanks to this great cooperation, a number of offenders who were misusing ration cards for petroleum products in Sanandaj and Bandar 'Abbas were identified and arrested. They are currently in jail. By investigating offenses committed in a single privately run gas station, the members of a ring forging oil ration cards were identified in Tehran. In Arak, another group, guilty of failing to destroy used ration cards, was also uncovered and its members arrested.

Mr Aqazadeh continued: The names and details of the owners of 5,000 vans with red license plates, who received 2 or several, and in one case 11, gas ration cards for the same vehicle, have been prepared by our computers. They will be put at the disposal of the judiciary for prosecution.

The minister concluded by referring to the problems associated with the distribution of 120 million liters of petroleum products each day throughout the country, which is done largely through ration cards. He asked the public to contact the appropriate inspectorate whenever they encounter offenses in connection with the distribution of petroleum products.

Growth in Petrochemical Industries Planned

LD162315 Tehran IRNA in English 1615 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 16, IRNA—The Oil Ministry is to develop Iranian petrochemical industries through two five-year plans in an effort to meet domestic needs for petrochemical products and also to export surplus production, revealed Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh here Saturday.

The oil minister, addressing a press conference, said the Islamic Republic has plenty of raw materials needed for the petrochemical industry, which would save Iran a large amount of foreign exchange.

On the advantages of petrochemicals as compared to other industries, the oil minister said that Iran is completely self-sufficient in raw materials needed for this industry from which many vital derivatives can be produced.

Aqazadeh noted that increase in Iranian non-oil exports in the future, development of petrochemical-related industries and creation of new jobs are among other advantages of this key industry.

Some $950 million out of $1.8 billion to be invested in the first five-year plan will be returned only a year after the start of the production, stressed Aqazadeh.

Petrochemical products are used in the manufacture of electric appliances, plastic wares, synthetic fibers, various kinds of coverings and coatings, films, hygienic ware, various types of pipes, paints, fertilizers, sponge and various other things.

Government Notes Increase in Non-Oil Exports

LD172303 Tehran IRNA in English 1712 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 17, IRNA—Iran earned $840 million by exporting 896,000 tons of non-oil goods in the last nine months of 1987, which shows increases of 25.18 percent and 81.07 percent respectively in terms of value and weight, announced the customs office here Sunday.

The customs office said that carpets topped the list of exports in terms of value, with a gross weight of 9,000 tons.

Pistachio kernel and nuts weighing 44,000 tons and a variety of hides weighing 10,000 tons ranked second and third in terms of value.

Fresh and dried fruits, vegetables, mineral and metal ores, construction materials, tricot, woollen and cotton textiles, various types of thread, pharmaceutical and industrial goods, were among other items exported during the same period.

Meanwhile the most valuable goods exported between November 22 and December 22 were hand woven woollen carpets, pistachio, kernels, various types of hides, fishes and caviar which accounted for 77.51 percent of the total goods exported during the one month period.

Agriculture Minister Views Export Potential

LD161744 Tehran IRNA in English 1439 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 16, IRNA—Iran's gross agricultural output has increased to 43 million tons from 30 million tons at the victory of the Islamic revolution in 1979, said Agriculture Minister 'Abbas-'Ali Zali here Saturday.

Zali told IRNA that the Islamic Republic of Iran can export with ease a billion dollars worth of agricultural products per year, if certain bottlenecks in agricultural exports are removed and agricultural related industries are established.

He said the cabinet has recently decided that more attention should be paid to Iran's potential agricultural resources so that the country could become self-sufficient in most agricultural products during a reasonable period of time.

Such a decision has been made in light of Iran's rapid population growth, the country's increasing need for foodstuff and the current foodstuff situation in the world, Zali said.

The minister said that it is necessary for the government to take speedy measures to remove all agricultural shortages because unless producers are provided with their needed tools and fertilizers on time, no good results could be achieved in this field.

Last year, Zali said, a total of dlrs 400 million worth of agricultural produce was exported, noting that the figure could easily climb to dlrs one billion if current problems are resolved.

Iran enjoys a surplus fruit production including citrus and many other agricultural produces, a major part of which could be exported, concluded the minister.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Receives Nicaraguan Envoy

LD161756 Tehran IRNA in English 1550 GMT 16 Jan 88

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 16, IRNA—Nicaraguan Ambassador to Iran Gonzalo Murillo called on Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Saturday to submit to him a message from the Managua government voicing support for Palestinian Muslims' mass uprising against the Zionist regime.

The message also condemned the Zionist entity's inhuman actions against Palestinian Muslims, underlining the need to establish a free independent Palestinian government and to restore the Palestinian Muslims' denied rights to them.

The Nicaraguan ambassador lauded the Palestinian people's heroic struggles against the regime occupying holy Jerusalem.

In response, the Majlis speaker said that he was glad Nicaragua had established an anti-imperialist base near the U.S. and had made imperialist leaders uncomfortable by its struggles.

The Americans are as angry at the Islamic revolution as they are at the Nicaraguan revolution because both of them have endangered the U.S.' illegitimate interests in the world, noted Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed that they (Americans) have mobilized all their resources in a bid to eliminate the Islamic revolution and have always demonstrated their anger towards the revolution impudently, regardless of international diplomatic norms.

The Islamic Republic's novel way of confronting the U.S. plots sets a valuable example for other nations, making them fearless of imperialism, added the speaker.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani, pointing to the Nicaraguan Government's message regarding the Palestinian uprising, said that if other countries had taken such a stand the Zionist entity would not have been able to continue its atrocities against Palestinian Muslims.

Majlis Speaker on Release of Sudanese POW's

LD172003 Tehran IRNA in English 1717 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 17, IRNA—Sudanese officials are very much inclined to expand relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, said Sudanese Ambassador Ibrahim Ahmad 'Uthman Hamra in his meeting with Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, here Saturday.

The Sudanese envoy expressed hope that Tehran-Khartoum relations would reach a desirable level through the execution of a letter of understanding between the two countries.

Hamra thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for freeing some of the Sudanese POWs captured in the Iraqi imposed war. "Sudanese officials hope Iran would release the remaining Sudanese POWs," he added.

In reply, the Majlis speaker said the Islamic Republic is aware of the existing issues in Sudan and good intentions of that country's officials for promoting relations with Iran. "Your country is burdened with many pressures," he added.

Iran enjoys vast facilities to help Sudan, Hoj. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said adding: "Therefore we can expand our cooperation in political, economic and cultural fields."

On the remaining Sudanese POWs in Iran, the Majlis speaker said if it is clear they (POWs) do not oppose Islam and have not participated voluntarily in the imposed war and also have no connections with the Ba'th Party, then they might be freed. "We are studying the issue," he concluded.

Montazeri Receives Islamic Committee Officials

LD151735 Tehran IRAN in English 1523 GMT 15 Jan 88

[Text] Qom, Jan. 15, IRNA—Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri, the future leader of the Islamic revolution, received a group of officials from the anti-narcotics department of the Islamic Revolution's Committees (IRC) here Wednesday.

The ayatollah appreciating the efforts and services rendered by the IRC gave relevant advice to the visiting officials.

Meanwhile, university professors of Islamic studies along with Acting Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati and a group of Foreign Ministry female employees also called on Ayatollah Montazeri in this holy city Thursday.

A sum of rls. 2.5 million (about 41,666 dlrs.) donated by the Islamic Republic's supporters abroad, was presented to the ayatollah for the war fronts by the acting foreign minister.

UK 'Resisting' Pressure To Win Waite Release

LD191447 Tehran IRNA in English 1235 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] London, Jan. 19, IRNA—Prime Minister Thatcher is resisting the growing pressure to act about the missing archbishop of Canterbury's envoy Terry Waite, who disappeared in Beirut last year.

Waite was negotiating for the release of two Americans held in Lebanon when he disappeared on January 20, 1987 and virtually every week there are reports that detract attention from the possibility that his detention could be due to British policy in the Middle East.

The latest speculation that he will not be released until after President Reagan leaves office has been discounted by Waite's family and denied as "fabricated, false and unfounded" by Hizballah, which had been implicated in the story by the British SUNDAY EXPRESS.

Author of the story Gordon Thomas is a former correspondent on Catholic affairs, whose work has at times been the centre of controversy in Ireland where he lives.

Some observers in London connect the mounting rumours about the envoy with Thatcher's attempts to deflect any responsibility away from her government and say that to suggest his release lies in Washington reduces the pressure on her to act.

They further add that other reports claiming Waite is being held for some exorbitant ransom fee supports her arguments not to intervene and weakens the case that his detention is politically motivated.

The SUNDAY TELEGRAPH believes that the government's strategy is to "play the whole thing down" and said that at the beginning of the month Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe chaired a secret high-level meeting to discuss the subject.

"It is the fervent wish of the government that the first anniversary this week of the disappearance of Terry Waite should pass with the minimum expression of regret consistent with propriety," it said.

Whether such a policy would continue to receive British public support and accept that the government was doing everything morally possible to free him, the newspaper was unsure and felt that it was "very much open to question."

Tehran Comments on Mubarak's Middle East Tour
LD172303 Tehran in English to Europe 1930 GMT 17 Jan 88

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Apparently, Husni Mubarak, the head of the regime ruling over Egypt, yesterday after a short visit to Baghdad and Jordan set out for Egypt. A week ago, at the beginning of Mubarak's trip to the region, the Western mass media evaluated this trip as a beginning for the return of Egypt to the Arab world. In a coordinated measure, extensive propaganda began on the probable results and consequences of this trip. This propaganda mainly rotated round this axis that only Egypt will be able to solve the problems of the Arab countries. [Passage indistinct] but the truth is that the regime ruling over Egypt, as has also been clear since the conclusion of Camp David peace accords, has never taken a measure with its own initiative.

Since Sadat's time, and since the time when this regime accepted the disgrace of concluding a separate accord with Israel for the price of sacrificing Islamic, Arab ideals, it has never taken a step in favor of the Egyptian nation and its liberation struggles. An evidence to this claim is the current struggles in Egypt and the declaration of increasing hatred against Mubarak's regime in that country. Perhaps for this reason one can consider Mubarak's recent trip to the Persian Gulf countries and his statements about the issues of the region a preplanned mission, which has been commissioned to him by Washington and Tel Aviv. As it is derived from the evidence, in this trip Mubarak has had the mission to take another step forward in securing the imperialist objective while deviating the minds of the Muslims from the heroic uprising of the Palestinian people and overshadowing the movements related to it. All during his trip, Mubarak by overplaying the imaginary dangers which threaten the Persian Gulf littoral states, tried to take a step in amending the defeated plan, which for a long time its planners had been faced with doubts about its effectiveness.

Although it is possible that the region's biased opinions are waiting to receive aid and an invitation leading to America's direct military presence in the region, however, it is clear that with some foresight other countries will be unwilling to repeat such an experience. It is possible that some countries such as Kuwait, with all their impudence, have fallen into the trap of the American scenario: the invitation of foreign forces—still want to experience it again. [sentence as heard] But maybe not every country is willing to repeat the same mistake. Maybe the ever-increasing internal problems and economic bottlenecks, and most important, the American-Zionist pressure, has forced Egypt's ruler to announce his readiness for the so-called assistance for securing the Persian Gulf shaykhdoms. However, it is not impossible that, beside receiving aid packages from the Persian Gulf shaykhdoms, he will be able to embark on any special measures. This point is as important, in the view that Mubarak's regime is facing many problems. Due to this reason, it is hard to imagine his preparedness in solving further problems. For the same reason, maybe one can say that Mubarak's trip to the Persian Gulf region, instead of giving moral support to the supporters of the American policies in the region, has created doubts that relying upon the foundations which in themselves are shaky is not so wise.

Iraq 'Undermining' GCC Entente With Tehran
LD180656 Tehran IRNA in English 0653 GMT 18 Jan 88

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 18, IRNA—Informed sources in Kuwait say the Baghdad government is undermining the efforts of member countries of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council for an entente cordiale between those countries and Iran. They say Saddam Husayn of Iraq is sending personal envoys to heads of the council's member states with secret messages and warnings against the consequence of any attempted intimacy with Iran.

The same sources maintain that the official visit to Kuwait, Sunday, of Saddam Husayn's first aide 'Izzat Ibrahim was made precisely with the same purpose.

In Abu Dhabi on Saturday, Mohammad Hoseyn Lavasani of the Iranian Foreign ministry visited the UAE minister of state for foreign affairs, Rashid 'Abdallah, and presented him a message from the Iranian foreign minister, Dr 'Ali-Akbar Velayati.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry official and the UAE minister also reviewed outlooks for future contacts between the Islamic government and member states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council.

The visit to Abu Dhabi of the Iranian official has apparently triggered hasty trips from Baghdad to Persian Gulf capitals in a bid to neutralize the council's efforts for better understanding with Iran.

Kuwaiti Oil Contracts Threatened by Attacks
LD191802 Tehran IRNA in English 1229 GMT 19 Jan 88

[Text] London, Jan. 19, IRNA—Attacks on Kuwaiti shipping last month grew so much as to threaten the sheikhdom's oil commitments, says a report from Kuwait.

In a dispatch from the Persian Gulf sheikhdom Monday, the WASHINGTON POST said that millions of dollars worth of damage had been inflicted on Kuwait's oil industry due to the increasing attacks on shipping serving the sheikhdom.

Kuwaiti Government figures show that since American convoy operations began last summer, a total of 18 vessels have been hit travelling to or from Kuwait including two reflagged U.S. tankers.

The first casualty occurred two days after the reflagging operations began when the Bridgeton supertanker hit a mine on July 24. Another Kuwaiti vessel flying American colours was hit with a missile on October 17 and five days later its sea island terminal was damaged.

In the first six months of 1987 attacks on shipping were averaging one every three days, but after the American convoys started, raids on shipping doubled to two every three days in the latter half of the year.

"The attacks were so intense in December", the WASHINGTON POST said, "that the sheikhdom was in danger of not being able to meet its contracts to deliver crude oil to customers in Europe and Asia."

The increased raids on shipping has turned out to be a bonus for the ship repair yards in Kuwait's neighbouring states of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.

LLOYD'S LIST shipping gazette reported Monday that Dubayy Drydocks is expecting a 40 percent rise in turnover in its business year ending next month and that Arab Ship Repair Yards in Bahrain has also handled a considerable increase in work due to ship attacks.

West Europe 'Trapped' by U.S. Gulf Policies

LD211302 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1109 GMT 21 Jan 88

[Station commentary: "Western Europe Trapped by American Expansionism in the Persian Gulf"]

[Text] Yesterday, the Italian Senate rejected a draft bill from the Italian Government proposing the allocation of $40 million to finance that country's fleet in the Persian Gulf. The Communist faction left the Senate after some debate, and the chamber lost the quorum necessary to approve the government's draft bill.

While the Italian Government was having problems meeting the expenses of its forces in the Persian Gulf, the French Government announced the withdrawal of some of its units there. Without giving any details, French Defense Minister Andre Giraud said that some of the country's minesweepers were no longer in the area.

Italy's difficulties and the recent French position demonstrate the unwise move which Reagan's managerial clique forced on its European allies. In the past few months, the waters of the Persian Gulf have become a venue for linkage in the Iraqi regime's war strategy, that is, to drag as many foreign forces into the war as possible, and America's plans to check political and military activities in the region.

Those European countries that have embroiled themselves in the Persian Gulf have suffered major losses without reaping any benefit. If those European governments keep up their military presence, side by side with America's war policy, which has shown itself in support of Iraq, countless questions will arise in the hearts of the public and among the opposition in those states. The economies of those countries will also be hurt by the high cost of maintaining their forces in the Persian Gulf. Britain, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and France are now trapped in a hostile place, thanks to the policy of American statesmen and the pressure of their expansionism.

France's recent position, as well as the clashes among Italian senators and Belgium's decision to reduce its forces in the Persian Gulf, all reflect the fact that each of these governments is taking independent action to escape this trap in accordance with its own domestic situation. Despite America's desire to portray itself as the leader of Western Europe, it can do nothing significant to solve the problems of those countries trapped in the Persian Gulf.

The difficulties facing the United States and its European allies in the Persian Gulf are a product of America's interventionist action. They are proof that the position taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran, which demands the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Persian Gulf, the participation of regional countries in maintaining security, and the prevention of the Iraqi regime's warmongering policies, is justified.